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A COURSE OF ADDRESSES
ON THE
WORD AND WORKS
OF GOD.

DELIVERED TO

An Evangelical Association of Young Men.

BY

MAURICE LOTHIAN.

Thy Word giveth light.—PSA. cxix. 130.

All Thy works praise Thee.—PSA. cxlv. 10.

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P R E F A C E.

THE history of these Addresses is very simple. They were prepared and intended *only* for an association of young men. The author, for nearly half a century, had spent his Sabbath evenings chiefly in giving the usual instruction to Sabbath-school children.

At length, in the hope of attaching them to a religious life after they reached the age at which the more advanced scholars usually leave the Sabbath-school, he succeeded in 1855 in forming an association of young men, whose ages varied from fifteen to five-and-twenty years and upwards, to whom it was necessary to provide suitable addresses. That association lasted till a comparatively recent period.

Though engaged in a profession which left him little leisure, he endeavoured to gather from any source within his power, whatever information might be useful to his interesting charge, and occasionally embodied it in a written form. Some of these

Addresses are now published. They contain nothing that is either original or novel. Display was not aimed at. The object was to convince those in early life of the *truth* of Christianity, and to explain its import.

Being afterwards laid aside by indisposition, he placed some of the Addresses at the disposal of the Editor of the *Christian Treasury*, which will account for their having appeared in that exceedingly valuable periodical throughout the year 1874.

Observing the tendency of modern thought to ignore old and substitute new ideas, it also occurred to the author to submit, in the present somewhat enlarged form, the grounds of his conviction that the old theological truths ought to be imperatively and uncompromisingly maintained. The words 'assurance,' or 'confident belief,' feebly express the *strength* of his convictions on that subject. As a layman, he had not the advantages of any special theological training; and he was subjected in early life to the evil influences of unfledged and ill-instructed, but very confident, sceptics, who are occasionally found in professional chambers. This led him, as far as he was able, to examine the Christian evidences and other kindred topics for himself, and the result was, that he became

satisfied, and *knew* that the Bible *is* a revelation from God ; from which it follows, that man's simple duty is to accept its statements in their obvious meaning with reverence and without equivocation or reservation. Accordingly, in his Addresses, he gave his reasons for resting on the divine inspiration of the Bible ; and that point being determined, when he came to consider what '*saith* the Scripture,' he generally stated it without argument,—contenting himself with quoting or referring to the portion of holy writ on which the statements rested.

Whether he has been in any degree successful, and whether the publication may suggest to others how young men past the ordinary age of Sunday scholars should be treated, he cannot know ; but he is convinced that persons better qualified, should provide more than milk for those who have ceased to be babes.

M. L.

June 1876.

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SABBATH EVENING ADDRESSES

TO YOUNG MEN

On the Word and Works of God.

ADDRESS FIRST.

The world by wisdom knew not God.—1 Cor. i. 21.
Search the Scriptures.—John v. 39.

INTRODUCTION.

Few criminals are without intense anxiety about the result of their approaching trials before an earthly judge. Some who have slept the night before their execution, could not sleep the night before their trial. Apply this to ourselves. We have all broken God's law, and must one day undergo a solemn trial before His bar, and yet, because it may be distant, though it may be nearer than to-morrow's sun-rise, it is too little in our thoughts. On the plea of innocence, not one of us can escape ; our own hearts condemn us, and how then shall we appear before God ? This is a momentous question, and unless God himself had been pleased to answer it, we must have died in doubt and gloom. By our reason, we can discover that God's natural laws are perfect, and we have no right to assume that His moral

laws are imperfect. He alone can tell how He will deal with those who have broken His moral laws. The Bible claims to be a revelation from Himself on that subject, and hence it becomes our first duty to ascertain whether it is in truth what it professes to be. Instead, however, of honestly endeavouring to ascertain whether the Bible be truly such a revelation, too many individuals fall into the error of enquiring in the first place, whether it accords with what they call 'the inner spirit of man.' If it do not, they disbelieve it.

It is sad to contemplate the changes, which at different times have come over the public mind on religious subjects. Last century was a period of much spiritual indifference; and the present is one of much reckless speculation, boastfully called free thought. This is about as mischievous as indifference; for in too many instances, instead of looking to the evidences, and then implicitly believing the word of God, it leads to two separate ways, neither of them right. It sends some people to the Church of Rome, where the imaginative devotee finds mysteries enough before which he surrenders reason altogether; and it leads others, who refuse to follow the priesthood, to question everything—wide extremes—the one of superstition, the other of infidelity.

Independent of revelation, we can neither know how God will deal with us hereafter, nor even with certainty whether there be any hereafter for us.

But the Bible makes full disclosures on these subjects; and God has been pleased to accompany it with conclusive proofs of its divine inspiration. If really so vouched, it becomes us to receive it without cavilling. Let it be our object to find the truth. If we act otherwise, it must be at our own peril.

We shall proceed to show that the Bible is truly a revelation from God; beginning first by adverting to

THE OLD TESTAMENT,

*Particularly the five books of Moses, and books of Joshua,
Isaiah, and Jeremiah.*

The books of the Old Testament were published at different periods extending over 1500 years. Their being bound together in one volume is merely a matter of convenience. The genuineness of each book must be proved separately.

We learn from Deuteronomy xxxi. 24-26, that the first five books of MOSES,—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, when finished, were deposited at the side of the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, and that it was the duty of the Levites who bore the Ark, to preserve them there.

These books were thus appointed to be kept, as our title-deeds are kept, in a national record, under responsible record-keepers.

Copies, however, of these books were made and freely circulated ; and it was required of each king, that with his own hands (Deut. xvii. 18,19) ‘ he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites : and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life ; that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law, and these statutes, to do them.’ We learn from Josephus, that copies of these books were made and carefully preserved by each of the tribes of Israel, and also by private families.

About seven hundred years after the *original* copy was deposited, as already mentioned, at the side of the Ark, and about six hundred and twenty-four years before the birth of Christ, it was found by Hilkiiah the high priest, who

delivered it to Shaphan, who read it before King Josiah as detailed in 2 Kings xxii. 8, 9, 10.

We can easily understand how these five Books of Moses came to be carefully preserved. They embraced enactments of the most comprehensive kind, not only for the public worship of God, but also for the adjudication of civil and criminal, and social questions. They determined the rights of creditors and debtors—husbands and wives—parents and children—masters, servants, and slaves—judges and litigants. In all these departments they were the national legal institutes. They appointed the registration of children and citizens—regulated the weights and measures—made arrangements for the protection of health, the inspection and cleansing of persons affected with contagious diseases—and even determined the number of holidays. Books embracing so many topics must have been referred to daily ; and thus not only would be well known, but, like our Acts of Parliament, they must have been preserved with care. To feel how true this is, the Books of Moses deserve to be carefully examined. His life closed about 1450 years before the birth of Christ.

The next book of the Old Testament to which we shall advert is the book of JOSHUA, who on the death of Moses succeeded him as leader. In its xxiv. chapter and 26 verse, we are informed that JOSHUA wrote all the words of *his* book, in the book of the law of God that was deposited in the sanctuary. Moreover, this book of Joshua recorded the division of the promised land among the tribes, and thus became a national deed of conveyance which all were interested to preserve. From the 13th chapter almost to the end of the book of Joshua, we have the division and appropriation of the Land given with very great minuteness, so that a stranger with this book in his hand could easily have recognised the boundaries. Take one example from

chapter xvi.—‘the lot of the children of Joseph fell from Jordan by Jericho, unto the water of Jericho on the east, to the wilderness that goeth up from Jericho, throughout mount Bethel, and goeth out from Bethel to Luz, and passeth along unto the borders of Archi to Ataroth, and goeth down westward to the coast of Japhleti, unto the coast of Bethhoron the nether, and to Gezer : and the goings out thereof are at the sea. So the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim took their inheritance.’ This is like what in the law of Scotland is called a *bounding-charter*. It is more articulate than many of the descriptions contained in charters of land in our own time and country. In a similar style the division in favour of the other tribes is carefully defined—so we may well believe that this book of Joshua would be preserved in the Ark of the Covenant, and copies of it would be made by individuals with the same care as the other books. It was the *magna charta* of all the tribes, and undoubtedly would be preserved like the title-deeds of landed estates in our public registers.

Joshua died about 1473 years before the birth of Christ.

The books which follow that of Joshua, namely, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, and others, deserve careful study, because besides the *intrinsic* evidence of their truthfulness, much of them has been *corroborated* by separate historical writings and recent discoveries. Moreover, and this is most important, they abound in *prophecies* subsequently fulfilled, and besides embrace periods of brilliant and instructive history. During this time none of the earlier books could possibly be lost. All the causes which secured their previous preservation continued to exist ; and the Psalms of David and other subsequent writings, contain many references to them.

The prophet ISAIAH lived from about the year 763 till

about the year 710 before Christ. He may be called the great Jewish prophet. Let us glance at this wonderful book. For sublimity, pathos, and simplicity—for solemn warnings, with consolations to the penitent—and for clear, circumstantial, and minute prophecies, it is altogether marvellous. Isaiah lived during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah—which embraced a period of the world remarkable for intelligence and learning. Shortly before it, the Grecian, and shortly after it, the Roman, empires were founded. At that period Isaiah foretold the rise and progress of a better kingdom that should last long after those should pass away. As his prophecies are singularly perspicuous, the date of his book becomes very important. It opens with a specification of the names of the Jewish kings in whose reigns he prophesied—and it was incorporated by Ezra into the Jewish canon 200 years after the death of the last of these kings as a previously accepted inspired book. And thus the fact of its existence long prior to the days of Ezra, who died about 450 years before Christ, is absolutely reliable. Isaiah foretold among other events, the captivity and the restoration of the Jews. Josephus says that it was the clearness of these prophecies, in which Cyrus was mentioned by name 113 years before he was born, that induced him to allow the Jews to return to their own land, and which prompted him to assist them in rebuilding their temple. In the edict as preserved in Ezra, which Cyrus issued, he recognises the prophecy as a command of God. In Ecclesiasticus (of the Apocrypha), which learned men are agreed was written though not inspired, as early as the third century before Christ (chap. xlviii. 22-25), a reference is made to Isaiah as the prophet 'who was great and faithful in his vision.'

We stay not to demonstrate the self-apparent truth, that the fulfilment, after long intervals, of distinct prophecies,

in the absence of any connecting links or chain of events between them, particularly if they be very numerous, must afford conclusive evidence of inspiration.

Isaiah foretold, as we shall hereafter notice, what befel other kingdoms, such as BABYLON and EGYPT, as well as CHRIST'S lineage, character, works, death, resurrection, and the subsequent extension, perpetuity, and glory of His kingdom. At the hazard of repetition (as we intend to advert to it more fully hereafter), we may notice at present, that whereas previously little more had been promised than that in the seed of Abraham all the nations of the earth should be blessed, Isaiah carried on the prophetic details by foretelling the particular family in which no fewer than seven hundred years afterwards Christ would be born—that Christ by some mysterious union would be both God and man—born a child, without pomp—would have a forerunner—would perform wonderful works, and yet be despised and rejected—would be put to death, and rise and reign. Isaiah's prophetic details regarding Christ are so minute that he has been called the fifth evangelist.

The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah reads like past, rather than long distant future history, and is so minute in its prophecy, that the conversion of an infidel was the result of his having found in Christ's life, an accurate fulfilment of all the circumstances foretold so long beforehand in that chapter. This wonderful book is, besides, well-fitted to kindle the love of God in these cold hearts of ours, for it assures us that 'He shall feed His flock as a shepherd, and carry the lambs in His bosom,' and that He who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out the heavens with His span,—'the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth,'—'who fainteth not neither is weary,' giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength,'—

‘and that they who wait upon the Lord shall mount up with wings as eagles, shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint.’ When we are summoned to leave this world, may we be able to say in the words of this inimitable prophet and poet : ‘Lo, He is our God, we have waited for Him and He will save us.’

The prophet JEREMIAH wrote his book shortly before the Jewish captivity, and rather more than six hundred years before Christ. The proofs that he lived at this early period are to be found in the Books of Chronicles, Kings, Nehemiah, and Malachi, in Josephus, and in 1 Esdras i. 28, 32, 47, 57 ; ii. ; iv. ; 2 Esdras ii. 18 ; Baruch vi. 1 ; 2 Maccabees ii. 1, 5, 7 ; xv. 15. Though we cannot accept the Apocryphal books as inspired, yet if any of them, proved to have been written centuries before the birth of Christ, contain references to other books, they settle the question of the *previous* existence of such other books ; and to this effect, we refer to the Apocrypha. Jeremiah’s prophecies, read in the light of subsequent events, are so remarkable as unavoidably lead to the conviction, that they were inspired. They are as worthy to be studied as those of Isaiah.

Under the circumstances above explained, we cannot doubt that all the books of the Old Testament which were written prior to the captivity of the Jews, about 600 years before the time of Christ, were carefully preserved, at least down till the captivity. At our next meeting we shall show how they were preserved both during that period and subsequently ; only remarking, that no question has ever been raised as to the preservation of the sacred writings after that event.

SECOND ADDRESS.

OF THE SACRED RECORDS

*At and after the Jewish Captivity and particularly the
Book of Daniel.*

WE have shown that the five books of Moses, and the books of Joshua, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others, were carefully preserved, prior to the time when the Jews were carried captive into Babylon. In the last chapter of 2 Chronicles, verses 17-21, we are told that then the house of the Lord was burnt, and that all its treasures were carried away, and the walls of Jerusalem were broken down, in conformity with 'the word of the Lord, spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah, to fulfil the threescore and ten years.' But though in a wreck and ruin so complete, and which lasted so long as seventy years, the original portions of the Old Testament, which had been deposited in the Ark of the Covenant, may have been destroyed, we must not imagine that all the copies of them were lost. Neither are we driven to the necessity of supposing, as the Jews allege, that at the end of the seventy years the original books were found among the ruins of the temple, or that they were restored by a miracle when Ezra rebuilt Jerusalem. The simple and sufficient truth, no doubt, is, that many copies were preserved both in the families of the Jewish captives, and by many Jews who were left behind. It would have been wonderful if it had been otherwise, seeing that out of

these books every pious father must have taught his children all that was known at that time about God, and the promises made to their fathers. This accords with the testimony already referred to by Josephus ; and there can be no doubt about it, because we know that Daniel, who was carried away at the captivity, was in use while the captivity lasted to read the Old Testament in so far as then written ; for in his prophecies he quotes passages from it, and makes express mention of the prophecies of Jeremiah. Thus Daniel says (ix. 2) that in his captivity he understood the number of the years whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah 'the prophet'—and again, verses 4-11 and 13, that the curse was poured out as written in the law of Moses. From copies so preserved of the Old Testament books, the originals, if lost, could easily have been restored ; and, when the rebuilding of the temple was finished, we learn, from chap. vi. 18 of Ezra, that the duty of the priests and Levites were of new regulated, 'AS IT IS WRITTEN IN THE BOOKS OF MOSES,' which books (see 8th chapter of Nehemiah) were brought by Ezra at the request of the people, and read before the congregation 'from the morning until mid-day.' Ezra then wrote the book which bears his name. It begins with the year before Christ 536. With it Ezra deposited in the new register authenticated copies of the other books.

It is satisfactory to know that their authentication was carefully ascertained and their preservation secured, as their importance required. In the viii. and ix. of Nehemiah we are told, that the 'words of the law,' which were received by the people joyously, were written and sealed by 'Princes, Levites, and Priests ;' and not only so, but in chap. x. he enumerates, by name and designation, a host of influential witnesses. Take the first two verses as a specimen—'Now those that sealed were Nehemiah the Tirshatha, the son of

Hachaliah, and Zidkija, Seraiah, Azariah,' and so on, amounting to a host of witnesses.

This brings us down to the Book of Daniel itself.

Daniel had been carried into Babylon at the captivity of the Jews. He was distinguished by such singular attainments, that he rapidly rose to the highest office in the foreign court. He expounded dreams that were not told to him, so that the royal dreamer recognised the dreams, and had no difficulty in admitting that Daniel was acting under the inspiration of God, 'who knoweth the thoughts of the heart.' Daniel foretold the rise and fall of great monarchies; and though writing nearly 600 years before the birth of our Saviour, he foretold the exact TIME OF HIS BIRTH, His *sufferings* and *death*, and the *glory that should follow*. He revealed the great truths of the punishment due to sin—the plan of expiation—the resurrection—the ministration of angels—and life everlasting. He was the only writer of the Old Testament who was honoured to give the title of the Son of Man to the Son of God; a title which Christ afterwards appropriated to Himself. Infidels would be glad if this book could be expunged from the Bible. Accordingly, at a very early period, a bitter enemy of Christianity called Porphyry, who lived between two and three hundred years *after* Christ, ventured to assert that this book must have been written not *before*, but *after*, the occurrence of the events which it prophesied. This assertion virtually conceded, that if it could be proved to have been written before these events, it must have been inspired. The reckless and ignorant Porphyry, however, did not know that the whole of the Old Testament, *including* the book of Daniel, had been translated into the Greek language some 200 or 300 years before the birth of Christ. This fact alone sets to rest *that* question for ever.

The Septuagint Old Testament Bible, that is a transla-

tion which goes by that name on account of its having been the work of seventy men, was executed 200 years at least *before* the time of Christ. A learned author called Tregelles, who wrote a treatise on the book of Daniel, said that the Septuagint was probably completed at the beginning of the third century *before* Christ. The book of Daniel is part of the Septuagint. Moreover, the book of Sirach—apocryphal only as to its inspiration and not as to its *date*—written between three and four hundred years before the time of Christ, refers to the book of Daniel ; and Barach—another book not apocryphal as to its date—written more than a century before Christ, not only refers to the book of Daniel in general terms, but specially to its 1st, 2nd, and 9th chapters.

Josephus tells us, that thirty-two years before these three centuries, the book of Daniel was shown by the high priest Jaddua to Alexander the Great, on occasion of his visit to Jerusalem, which occurred in the year 332 before Christ. It was shown to Alexander, because it contained prophecies regarding his political power, and that he would overcome the Persians, as he afterwards did. The name of the high priest Jaddua occurs in Nehemiah-xii. 11 and 22. The date of his holding the priestly office as given in Nehemiah, and the date of Alexander's visit as given by separate history, *are the same*.

In Josephus, book x. chap. x., and book xi. chap. xi., we find the book of Daniel, and also the principal events of his life, referred to, as long bygone and familiar traditions. Josephus says that the Jews had such reverence for their Old Testament Scriptures, that they would rather die than permit them to be tampered with ; which accounts for the book of Daniel having been retained in their canon ; for the precision with which it foretold the advent of the Messiah was, and has always been, a stumbling-block to

the Jews. Arnold, who wrote a treatise on the Apocrypha, has proved that the first book of Maccabees was written not later, and perhaps earlier, than 107 years before Christ; and in this book of Maccabees we have references not merely to Daniel by his name, but also to his deliverance from the den of lions. Explanatory references to Daniel and his doings and prophecies are so numerous and articulate in Maccabees, that Arnold calls the whole of that book 'a key to the mysteries in the 8th and 9th chapters of Daniel.' They relate to Daniel's prophecies as to the suspension of the daily sacrifice, the desecration of the sanctuary, the desolation and restoration of Jerusalem, and to the seventy weeks. In this same book of Maccabees we have an interesting story of an old priest Mattathias, when, on his death-bed, stimulating his sons to be zealous in defence of their religion, by reminding them of the examples of the three young men, who, rather than deny their faith, submitted to be thrown into the fiery furnace, and whom 'God delivered, as He did Daniel from the den of lions.' This occurred between 150 and 200 years before the time of Christ; so here again, whether the story of the old priest be fact or fiction, we have a narrative *written* long before the time of Christ, referring to the book of Daniel.

In the book of EZEKIEL, written, as all learned men agree, between 500 and 600 years before Christ, we find Daniel referred to in the following verses, chap. xiv. 14, 'though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job,' etc.; and again Daniel is referred to in chap. xxviii. 2, 3.

In consequence of the specific time mentioned by Daniel, there was a general expectation among the Jews and among learned men in other countries that Christ would appear exactly at the time He did. It was this expectation that led the wise men to travel from the east to worship Him, and which prompted Herod to commit

one of the most atrocious deeds on record, in the vain hope of destroying Him. An early writer, called Grotius, wrote a book entitled, 'The Truth of the Religion of Jesus Christ,' in which he mentions that a Rabbi named Nehumias, who flourished fifty years before Christ's appearance, proclaimed to the Jews that the time specified by Daniel of the coming of the Messiah could not then be more distant than fifty years from his time.

The antagonism which existed between the Pharisees and the Sadducees contributed to preserve the text of Daniel in its purity. The jealousy between these parties would have been roused instantly if either of them had been detected in tampering with any portion of the Scriptures, for however much they differed between themselves, they both claimed the Scriptures in their purity as the foundation of their respective creeds.

But the question as to the genuineness of the book of Daniel has been authoritatively settled by Christ himself. In Matthew xxiv. 15, Christ says, 'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet,' etc., 'flee into the mountains,' etc., a statement which is repeated in Mark xiii. 14. These words do more than prove the antiquity of the book of Daniel—they prove that it was inspired.

It was not necessary for the authentication of any of the books placed in the sanctuary *after* the restoration of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, that they should be referred to in any of the Old Testament books (which are not many) written after that event. Yet there are such references. In Zechariah's visions of the four horns and the four chariots, there are clear references to Daniel's prophecy of the four monarchies; and the prayer of Nehemiah is almost a repetition of the prayer for repentance recorded in the book of Daniel. Both Zechariah

and Nehemiah lived, the one nearly, and the other more than, a century after Daniel.

Next Sabbath evening we shall make some additional remarks about the Old Testament, besides noticing how early the art of writing was known.

THIRD ADDRESS.

OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN GENERAL,

And of its Recognition in the New.

THE art of engraving is referred to in Exod. xxxii. 16 ; the signet in Gen. xxxviii. ; and the iron pen in Job xix. 24.

The Levites were writers. They kept the registers of genealogies, and weights, and measures. Moses summoned the seventy elders by *writing* (Numb. xi. 26). Curses were written in a book (Numb. v. 13). Bills of divorcement were required to be in writing, and so was the territorial division (Josh. xviii. 4, 6, 9). Jeremiah took 'a roll of a book and wrote therein.' In the 45th Psalm a reference is made to the swift writer.

The *materials* on which the writing was executed were parchment and the like ; and some liquid like ink must have been employed, for, when a curse was to be recalled, the priest was directed to blot it out of the book with bitter water (Numb. v. 23).

Josephus, who wrote only a few years after Christ's resurrection, says :—' We have only twenty-two books which are justly believed to be of Divine authority, of which five are the books of Moses. From the death of Moses to the reign of Artaxerxes, the son of Xerxes, king of Persia, the prophets, who were the successors of Moses, have written thirteen books. The remaining four contain hymns to God, and precepts for the regulation of human life.' We have here a distinct recognition of the threefold

division of the Old Testament. He calls the number of the books twenty-two, while we have thirty-nine. But then Josephus counted the 1st and 2d Samuel as one book, the 1st and 2d Kings as another, and the 1st and 2d Chronicles as a third book, and not as six separate books. He added Ruth to one book, Esther to another, and Lamentations to a third; and he regarded the books of the twelve minor prophets as only one book, as they are actually represented in ancient catalogues of the books of the Old Testament which have come down to us. If Josephus had counted them as we do, he would have given the *exact number* of books of which our Old Testament is composed. They are fully recognised in the New Testament.

The Old Testament was usually divided by the Jews into three parts—the law, the prophets, and the psalms; a division well known and recognised in the time of our Saviour, who, before His ascension, said to His disciples (Luke xxiv. 44), ‘That all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me.’

In appealing to the consciences of the Jews, Christ, the reprover of error in every form, while He blamed them for misinterpreting and *adding* their traditions to the Scriptures, *never* blamed them for altering or falsifying them. And these Scriptures are generally referred to throughout the New Testament in such terms as these:—‘The oracles;’ the ‘lively oracles of God;’ the ‘Word of God;’ ‘the prophecy that came not in old time by the will of man;’ that ‘holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;’ the ‘engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls.’

In noticing how fully the Old Testament is recognised in the New, we may remark that in the very first chapter

of Matthew, verses 22, 23, there is a reference to chapter vii. verse 14 of Isaiah, as to the Saviour being born a child.

In the second chapter of Matthew, it is said, in verses 5, 6, that Bethlehem, the birthplace of Christ, was foretold by the prophet; and on turning to Micah v. 2, we find the prophecy, that Bethlehem though little among the thousands of Judah, 'yet out of thee shall He come that is to be ruler in Israel.'

In the 15th verse of the second chapter of Matthew there is a reference to Hosea xi. 1, in connection with the calling of Christ out of Egypt; and in the 15th verse of the same chapter a reference to the 15th verse of the thirty-first chapter of Jeremiah, in these words, 'Out of Egypt have I called my Son;' and then (ver. 17) 'was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet;' and here the words of the prophecy are quoted, foretelling the destruction of the young children by Herod.

In the same chapter of Matthew v. 23, the narrative is given of Christ's dwelling with His parents in a city of Nazareth, whereby that 'was fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, He shall be called a Nazarene.'

In the third chapter of Matthew, a prophecy is referred to as to the forerunner of our Lord, which is found in Isaiah xl. 3, and in Malachi iii. 1.

In the temptation of Christ, as recorded in the fourth chapter of Matthew, quotations are given from the 11th and 12th verses of the ninety-first Psalm; and from Deuteronomy vi. 16, and viii. 3.

In the fifth chapter of Matthew, Christ says, 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets;' and then throughout the remainder of the chapter he either quotes from, or refers to, passages in the Old Testament,

which are to be found in Exodus, Deuteronomy, Leviticus, and the Psalms.

In the eighth chapter of Matthew we find quotations from the remarkable fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, which foretold the leading events of Christ's life.

In the ninth of Matthew, ver. 13, we find Christ quoting from Hosea vi. 6, and in the eleventh chapter of Matthew quoting from the third chapter of Malachi.

In Christ's reproof of the Pharisees (Matthew xii. 3), on account of their merely formal observance of the Sabbath day, He asks, 'Have you not read what David did?' etc., which the Pharisees could only have read in 1 Samuel xxi. and Exodus xxix. Christ's references to Jonah and to the Ninevites show that His hearers were well acquainted with the book of Jonah.

The references in the book of Matthew alone to the Old Testament, include the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Judges, Samuel, the Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Jonah, Micah, and Malachi; and, besides this, the whole New Testament, as well as Matthew, abounds in such references.

In Paul's sermon to the Greeks at Athens, who knew not the Old Testament, he made no allusions to it; but when he is called on for his defence before Agrippa, who was 'expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews,' Paul appealed to the Old Testament, saying, 'None other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.' The same apostle, in his last epistle to Timothy, reminds him that from a child he had known the Holy Scriptures, which could only then mean the Old Testament, little of the New being then published; adding these emphatic and important words, 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.'

If the Old Testament existed and was recognised, as

we see it was, at and prior to the time of our Saviour and His apostles, it cannot for a moment be supposed to have undergone any change since that time.

ORIGEN, who lived about 100 years after the apostle John, published a catalogue of the books of the Old Testament, corresponding with ours, which catalogue is preserved in the writings of EUSEBIUS. After that date, the number of writers and councils in all ages giving similar concurring testimony is astonishing. Ever since the days of the apostles, the Old Testament may be said to have been in the joint-keeping of both Jews and Christians. There is no want of collateral testimony ; for example, ALEXANDER of New Jersey tells us, ‘ There is a distinct and remarkable testimony to the antiquity of the five books of Moses in the Samaritan Pentateuch, which has existed in a form entirely separate from the Jewish copies, and in a character totally different from that in which the Hebrew Bible has been for many ages written.’ Six hundred, or nearly seven hundred years before the time of Christ, the Samaritans possessed a translation of the Old Testament ; and 280 years before the days of Christ the Old Testament was translated into Greek. These Scriptures have come down to us in different languages, and in perfect agreement, through different people, Jews, Samaritans, and Greeks. The channels differ : the living waters don’t differ.

We might have noticed that after the Babylonish captivity, the pure Hebrew language ceased to be spoken or written ; and all the books of the Bible written before that event are in pure Hebrew, thus affording additional intrinsic evidence of their antiquity.

We close the present address by remarking that—let infidels, unhappily for themselves, deal with the Scriptures as they dare—it is proved, just as certainly as we exist, that these Scriptures were originally *not only* embodied, and have

since been preserved from age to age, in a pure, authentic, and unchangeable form, *but also* that there is sufficient and conclusive evidence (to be more fully considered at our future meetings) that they were originally *inspired* by the THE ONLY LIVING AND TRUE GOD, who, though dwelling above the heavens, regards with infinite mercy the humble and the contrite. It needs no words to show the obligation which is thereby laid on us to search the Scriptures.

FOURTH ADDRESS.

THE NEW TESTAMENT,

And particularly the Four Gospels.

BEFORE our Lord finally parted from His disciples, He commanded them to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. His own apparent want of success is easily accounted for ; had it been otherwise, the Jews would 'not have crucified the Lord of glory.' But for that end He came into the world, and He *designed* to do nothing that could prevent the accomplishment of that end.—Having finished the work His Father gave Him to do, He commanded His disciples, before they went on their high mission, to wait till they received the Holy Ghost. This gift was conferred on them on the day of Pentecost, when, in fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel, as well as the promise of Christ, they proceeded, divinely inspired, to preach the gospel. Their success was wonderful, thousands being converted by such sermons as those of Peter, recorded in the 2d chapter of the Acts. At length, in about eight or ten years after the resurrection, a written account of the life of Christ appeared by MATTHEW, and most probably in the Hebrew language, for the use of the Jews. A Greek translation was soon afterwards made either by Matthew himself or under his superintendence. The other gospels were written in Greek all previous to the destruction of Jerusalem. There is a book still extant which learned men agree was written *before* that event, some believe by BAR-

NABAS, the companion of Paul, in which there are many quotations or extracts taken from the book of Matthew. References are also made to this book by a bishop of Hierapolis, called PAPIAS, who was personally acquainted with the Apostle John.

In regard to MARK's gospel, it is agreed that it was written about ten years after the resurrection, at the request of converts at Rome, and most probably under the supervision of the Apostle Peter.

LUKE is mentioned in the Scriptures as the travelling companion of Paul, and he was with Paul during his two years' confinement in Rome. There is no doubt that he is the same who is mentioned in Paul's epistle to Philemon v. 24, and who, in Colossians iv. 14, is called the physician. He was a man of education. In the preface to his gospel, written fifteen years after the resurrection, Luke says—'Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things,' etc., 'it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the *certainty* of those things wherein thou *hast been* instructed.' It is of some importance to have had in Luke, a well-informed Greek, skilled at least in the medical science, not likely to be imposed on. He was qualified to investigate miraculous cures of diseases. His gospel was received by the primitive churches as inspired, not only in the days of Paul, but also for thirty years before the death of the Apostle John.

We now come to the gospel of JOHN, the bosom friend and companion of Jesus; the last to leave His cross and the first to visit His sepulchre. His long life was foretold by Christ, and no less than six early writers concur in stating that he attained the age of 100 years and upwards.

There is a tradition mentioned by JEROME, and confirmed by Irenæus, that certain heresies having broken out, deputations from many of the churches waited on John, requesting him to write whatever had been revealed to him bearing on these heresies, and also to supply what the other evangelists had not written of the life of Jesus. John answered, that before doing so a day must be appointed for public fasting and prayer to God. This was accordingly held, and at the close of the day he commenced his gospel in the sublime words—‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory’—words not more explicit than many similar statements of other apostles ; for example, those of Paul, in the first chapter of the Hebrews, ‘Unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.’

Matthew, Mark, and Luke, wrote chiefly regarding two of the years of our Lord’s public ministry ; John omits the most of *that* period, and gives chiefly the history of the period which they had not given. As he was about 100 years old before he wrote his gospel, it may be regarded as his dying declaration. He represents himself as having been personally the witness of all that he describes, so that his entire testimony is either absolutely true or absolutely false. As he was acquainted with the other three gospels, and wrote his to supply some of the *sayings* rather than *works* of Christ, he narrates fewer miracles than the others ; but he closes his book with these words—‘And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book : but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God ; and that believing ye might have life through His name (John xx. 30, 31).

All the four gospels were written previous to the de-

struction of Jerusalem, which occurred thirty-seven years after the crucifixion of our Lord. All the gospels contain predictions of that event, so that their very early date is fixed. But both their early date and their authorships are also fixed by abundance of collateral evidence. They are referred to in the writings of the earliest fathers. Thus IRENÆUS, the Bishop of Lyons, who was acquainted with Polycarp, the disciple of the Apostle John, refers to the four gospels in the following terms :—‘ After our Lord had risen from the dead, they (*i.e.*, the apostles) were clothed with the power of the Holy Spirit descending upon them from on high, and were filled with all gifts, and possessed perfect knowledge, and they went forth to the ends of the earth, spreading the glad tidings of those blessings which God has conferred on us, and announcing peace from heaven to men, having all, and every one alike, the gospel of God. Matthew among the Hebrews published a gospel in their language, while Peter and Paul were preaching the gospel at Rome, and founding a church there. After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, himself delivered to us in writing what Peter preached : and Luke, the companion of Paul, recorded the gospel preached by him. Afterwards John, the disciple of the Lord who leaned upon His breast, likewise published a gospel while he dwelt at Ephesus in Asia. And all these have taught us that there is one God, the maker of heaven and earth, announced by the law and the prophets, and one Christ, the Son of God.’ This is remarkably explicit testimony.

It would be vain, however, to attempt to give the most sketchy account of the corroborative testimony of this kind which exists. Many witnesses who lived in the second century bear similar testimony. ATHENAGORAS, in the second century, was a heathen, who had determined to write a treatise *against* Christianity, and having examined

its evidences for the special purpose of refuting it, became a *convert*, and his subsequent writings contain quotations from all the four gospels. One of his works, still extant, was written to prove the resurrection of Christ. The early writer EUSEBIUS, quoting from two still earlier writers, whose works are now lost, says, 'That when Peter, in the reign of Claudius, had come to Rome and defeated Simon Magus, the people were so inflamed with love for the Christian truths as not to be satisfied with the hearing of them, unless they also had them written down. That accordingly they, with earnest entreaties, applied themselves to Mark, the companion of Peter, and whose gospel we now have, praying him that he would write down for them, and leave with them, an account of the doctrines which had been preached to them ; and that they did not desist from their request till they had prevailed on him, and procured his writing that which is now the gospel of Mark ; and that when Peter came to know this, he was, by the direction of the Holy Spirit, pleased with the request of the people, and *confirmed the gospel which was written by Mark* for the use of the churches.' An account similar to that of Eusebius is given by such writers as CLEMENT of Alexandria, TERTULLIAN, and ORIGEN.

The writings of all the evangelists are remarkable for that appearance of veracity which distinguishes honest witnesses. They are unvarnished, circumstantial, and consistent. They narrate facts that must have been within the knowledge of many of those to whom they preached ; and this is one explanation of the rapid progress which the gospel made after the resurrection of Christ. Just fancy a dozen of men appearing in our streets and announcing the resurrection of a malefactor executed forty days or even months previously. Unless the fact were recognised beyond dispute, such men would be treated as

maniacs and laughed at. But the early preaching of the gospel, accompanied by miraculous proofs, instantly produced converts by thousands, and rapidly spread throughout the Roman empire. The eloquent but infidel historian, GIBBON, is obliged to admit that, while that empire succumbed to hostile hordes, or 'was undermined by slow decay, a pure and humble religion insinuated itself into the minds of men—grew up in silence and obscurity—derived new vigour from opposition—and finally erected the triumphant banner of the Cross on the ruins of the Capitol.'

The references now made to the credibility of the evangelists presses on us, at once, that of the Apostle Paul, particularly in regard to the resurrection.

Paul frankly says, 'If Christ be not raised your faith is vain,' and you are 'yet in your sins' (1 Cor. xv. 17); 'BUT I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ (ver. 4) rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures, and was seen,' first by one, next twelve, and then five hundred witnesses, etc., 'of whom the greater part REMAIN UNTO THE PRESENT TIME;' and, 'last of all, HE WAS SEEN OF ME' (ver. 8).

PAUL, and mostly ALL the other apostles, sealed their testimony with their blood. Not one of them recanted. And look how touchingly Paul acted towards his young friend Timothy, whom he loved as his own son, when he (Paul) was looking forward to his own violent death. He did not warn Timothy to avoid doing that which would bring him to a similar and ignominious end. He did not advise him to escape while he had time. Pride has indeed prompted many a criminal to die with a lie on his tongue, who would have striven to save a loved one from a violent death; but Paul's dying and most earnest words to Timothy were (2 Tim. ii. 3), 'Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.' Remember (ver. 8) 'that He was raised *from*

the dead according to my gospel ;' and it is 'a faithful saying ;' (ver. 12) 'if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him.' Chap. iii. ver. 14, '*Continue* then in all the things which thou hast learned.' 'I charge thee therefore (chap. iv. 1) before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead ;' ver. 2, 'Preach the word, be instant in season and out of season ;' ver. 5, 'Endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist ;' ver. 6, '*For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.* I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day ; and not to me only, but to all them that love His appearing.' Therefore, he said (1 Cor. xvi. 13), stand 'fast in the faith.'

We are in more responsible circumstances than the ancient Jews. No doubt they saw the testimony of their inspired leaders authenticated by miracles. But we have not only that testified to us ; but in addition we have seen the fulfilment of many ancient prophecies, and a light thereby flashed on the Old Testament which they never beheld ; *we* have seen the testimony and the miracles of the apostles superadded to fulfilled prophecy and to the miracles of Christ. In our day *we* can understand how it behoved Christ to submit to death, and thereafter to enter into glory.

And if the impenitent, under the law of Moses, 'died without mercy,' of how much 'sorer punishment shall we be thought worthy' if we trample 'under foot' Christ's mediatorial work, and count the 'blood of the covenant an unholy thing' (Heb. x. 28, 29.)

FIFTH ADDRESS.

THE ACTS, THE EPISTLES, AND THE REVELATIONS.

HAVING called attention to the four Gospels, it is scarcely necessary to refer to the evidences in support of the genuineness of the remaining New Testament books. We know that LUKE wrote the Acts of the Apostles. In its preface he refers to the former treatise or gospel, which he had written to Theophilus. When Irenæus, the companion of a disciple of the Apostle John, quotes from this book of the Acts, he says, 'Luke, the companion and fellow-labourer of Paul, wrote thus,' etc. In another place Irenæus says, 'Paul's account of his going to Jerusalem exactly agrees with Luke's in the Acts.' When Clemens Alexandrinus cited Paul's speech at Athens, he says, 'So Luke in the Acts of the Apostles relates,' etc. And when Tertullian quotes from the Acts, he calls them 'the commentary of Luke.' Origen ascribes the Acts to Luke. Eusebius says, 'Luke has left us two inspired volumes, his Gospel and the Acts.' Polycarp, the disciple of John, and Justin Martyr, refer to the Acts as the work of Luke. The Syriac version of the New Testament ascribes the Acts to Luke; and in some very ancient manuscripts of the New Testament, still extant, his name is prefixed to the book of the Acts.

In regard to the writings of Paul, their genuineness is positively overlaid with proofs. Eighteen early writers quote from them; beginning, as one would expect, from Paul's fellow-labourer, Clement. There is only one point

in regard to which there is not an absolute agreement, and that is, not whether the Epistle to the Hebrews was written in the days of Paul, but whether it was written by him or by some of the seventy disciples. This doubt owes its existence to the circumstance that this epistle is the only New Testament book which does not set forth its authorship. Learned men are agreed that it was written in the year 62 or 63, about the end of Paul's first imprisonment at Rome. Some of the early fathers ascribe it to Luke, others to Barnabas and to Clement. But Clement himself, Paul's fellow-labourer, ascribes it to Paul, which ought to settle that question ; and so it may be held as settled.

The whole of the epistles were preserved with scrupulous care for centuries by the primitive churches to which they were addressed, just as these churches preserved *relics* of infinitely less value. TERTULLIAN, whose writings are still extant, and who wrote 160 years after the time of Paul, mentions that these early churches preserved the very *chairs* on which the apostles sat on the occasions when they visited them. He says, ' If you be willing to exercise your curiosity profitably in the business of your salvation, visit the apostolical churches, in which are the very chairs of the apostles, and in which their very authentic letters are recited, sending forth the voice of each one of them. Is Achaia near you ? You have Corinth. If you are not far from Macedonia, you have Philippi, and you have Thessalonica. If you can go to Asia you have Ephesus. But if you are near to Italy, you have Rome, from whence also you may be easily satisfied.' Who can tell whether, if the Pope would throw open to examination all the writings concealed in the Vatican, the original Epistle of Paul to the Romans may not yet be found ?

Besides the Epistles of Paul, we have the Epistles of JAMES and JOHN, PETER and JUDE. Everything adduced in

support of the genuineness of the Epistles of Paul might be repeated in regard to them. They were accepted by the primitive churches as having been written by the apostles, whose names they bear, and their contents were quoted by the early fathers and Christian writers.

It is interesting to notice the reverence with which the Apostles Jude and James, Christ's relatives according to the flesh, refer to Him. They never boasted of their relationship to Him in the flesh. The connection which they claim with Christ is of quite a different and a better kind. Jude begins his epistle with these words,—‘Jude the *servant* of Jesus Christ, and *brother* of James.’ And James in his epistle designates himself as ‘the *servant* of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.’

The book of the Revelations closes the canon of the New Testament. Its full import awaits yet to be disclosed. It expressly bears to have been written by the Apostle John, and this fact admits of historic proof. In dignity and sublimity it is equal, if it does not surpass, the other inspired books. Its primary object may have been to encourage the early followers of Jesus to stand firm under the severe sufferings to which, from conscience sake, they were exposed; and therefore honour, glory, and eternal life are impressively set before the faithful. But this book also gives the history of the future church on earth,—of her struggles with the power of darkness and the mystery of iniquity,—her final triumph,—and the perdition of her enemies.

The Revelations are grandly mysterious—they closed the New Testament, as the prophecies of Daniel, which they resemble in style and imagery, may be said to have closed the Old. Daniel's prophecies pointed to a definite period now past, and can be read in the light of accomplished facts; while those in the Revelations point to a

period still future, and they may not be altogether fulfilled till the end of time. This should make us careful to avoid rash and hasty interpretations.

The power of working miracles which John exercised, sufficiently proves, as he asserts, that he wrote under Divine inspiration. The date is easily fixed. In chapter xvi. 6 reference is made to one who was drunken with the blood of the saints, and of martyrs, some of whom had been beheaded. The first great persecution is thus referred to as being then *past*. It occurred in the reign of the hideous Nero, A.D. 64. In another chapter it is prophesied that the Jewish temple 'is given unto the Gentiles, and they shall tread it under foot.' This event referred to as being *future* occurred in A.D. 70, so that the Revelations *must* have been written in the course of the six years between 64 and 70. Their inspiration was universally admitted for nearly four hundred years. After that long period the clergy thought it expedient, on account of the mysteries they contain, to discontinue the *public* reading of them in the churches. But this was soon resumed. Their interpretation is undoubtedly difficult, and we may be content with the spiritual lessons which they teach. Our tendency to magnify great past or present events is apt to tempt us to regard such events as if they had been foretold. The overthrow of the Roman empire, the rise of Mahomet, the Papal Antichrist, and the French Revolution for example, were all astounding events, but we should not leap to the conclusion that they were all specifically prophesied. The supposed re-appearance and personal reign of Christ with hosts of revived martyrs for a thousand years in this world, and the re-appearance and final subjugation of Satan, may be left to be explained by events yet future. If the thousand years are to be regarded as in other prophecies, where a day is given for a year, that period may embrace no fewer than

three hundred and sixty-five thousand years ; and if so, as it may be, the world is indeed yet very *young*. Curiously enough, as showing the hazard of attempting premature explanations, we may refer to the fact that the early Christians thought the woman and the seven mountains, referred to in the Revelations, meant the Roman Empire and the first seven emperors, because it is said that '*five* are fallen and *one* is, and the *other* is *yet* to come.' The five who were fallen, they thought were Augustus and his four successors. The one who 'now is,' they thought was the then reigning Emperor Galba, and the seventh they thought was to be Nero, who they did not believe had committed suicide, but would re-appear. Remarkably enough, the numerical value of the letters in the name Nero, gave exactly the number of the year of the Beast as set forth in the Revelations xiii. 18. This shows the difficulty of dealing with symbolical language. But do not suppose that the Book of Revelations should not be diligently read. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable. In reading the warnings given to the Seven Churches of Asia, we may be led to ask ourselves, whether we have not left our first love, and should repent, that we may receive the crown of life. The Revelations assure us, that he who overcometh shall be clothed in white raiment, and have his name written in the Book of Life ; while all professors are cautioned against being neither cold nor hot. They also teach us to yield submission to God, who rebukes and chastens, but never forsakes whom He loves. Moreover, they assure us, that the religion of Christ shall triumph throughout all the world—the only religion which knows no decline—all others which ever appeared having either come to a close, or being in the course of decay. Christ shall finally come again, having on His vesture a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords, to take

His redeemed people to dwell with Himself before the throne of the Eternal, where there shall be no need of the light of the sun or of the moon, for the glory of God is the light of it.

It is a solemn *fact*, that at this moment each of us is travelling either to, or from, that blessed place. Let each answer for himself—to which?

SIXTH ADDRESS.

THE LAST SUBJECT CONTINUED.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.—2 Tim. iii. 16.

RECURRING to our last subject, it may be mentioned that IRENÆUS, to whom we have already referred, speaks of exact copies of the Book of Revelations existing in his time; which is confirmed by the concurring testimony of witnesses, then alive, who were personally acquainted with John. He further speaks of the original copy as having been 'seen no long time ago in our age, at the end of the reign of (the emperor) Domitian.' In an epistle preserved in the church of Lyons, in France, written about the year of our Lord 180, and in the writings of THEOPHILUS of Antioch, and CLEMENT of Alexandria, the Book of Revelations is referred to as written by John. In the works of the latter these words occur, 'sitting upon the four-and-twenty thrones, judging the people, as John says in the Revelation.' TERTULLIAN quotes largely. Take the following instance:—'The Apostle John in the Apocalypse describes a sharp two-edged sword coming out of the mouth of God.' A writer of great celebrity, HIPPOLYTUS, who lived in the third century, wrote a commentary, now lost, on this book, but which is referred to by a subsequent writer, JEROME. Hippolytus was held in such esteem by the early Christians, that they erected a monument to him in Rome, which, after lying for a long time buried under

ruins, was dug up in the year 1551. That monument contains a list of the books which Hippolytus wrote, and among his commentaries are those on 'the Gospel of John and the Revelation.' ORIGEN refers to 'John's Revelation and diverse' other books of Scripture. DIONYSIUS of Alexandria, who lived in the middle of the third century, speaks of the Revelations as having been acknowledged by the 'earlier fathers;' and CYPRIAN, the bishop of Carthage, incidentally refers to the Revelations in the following sentence :—'Hear, in the Revelation, the voice of thy Lord reproving such men as these, "thou sayest I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."' Other early writers, who lived in the close of the third century, quote largely from the Book of Revelations, and ascribe it to John. We have already mentioned, that at one time the divine *inspiration* of the Revelations was questioned; but no trace of such doubt appears earlier than the *fourth* century; and then the cause of the doubt appears also. Owing to the mysteries contained in it, and the folly of rash and ill-educated Christians offering absurd explanations of them, it was judged expedient to omit the public reading of this book in the churches, and hence the doubt may have arisen. But many of its predictions have been fulfilled in so remarkable a manner, that some learned men believe in its inspiration on *that* ground alone.

In a catalogue made up by ORIGEN about 100 years after John's death, preserved by EUSEBIUS, he mentions the four gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the fourteen Epistles of Paul, the two of Peter, the three of John, and the Book of Revelation, omitting only James and Jude: an omission clearly accidental, because in another part of Origen's writings, still preserved, he refers to both of these

books. In the fragment of an early work by CAIUS, published in the second century, these words occur—‘the third is the gospel of Luke. Luke was that physician, who, after the ascension, consorted with Paul. The fourth gospel was written by John, one of the disciples,’ etc. He adds, ‘though various elements are taught in the several gospels, yet the faith of believers is not diverse, since, with one pervading spirit, all things are declared by all, concerning the nativity, the passover, the resurrection, and concerning His conversation with His disciples, and His double advent,—in the second with glorious power, which is yet future. But the Acts of all the Apostles are comprehended in a single book. The Epistles of Paul declare to all who wish to know, on what account and from what place they were written. PAUL, following the example of his predecessor John, wrote epistles to the following seven named churches,—first to the Corinthians, the second to the Ephesians, the third to the Philippians, the fourth to the Colossians, the fifth to the Galatians, the sixth to the Thessalonians, and the seventh to the Romans; but to the Corinthians and the Thessalonians he wrote for the sake of correction a second time; and JOHN in the Apocalypse, though he addressed himself to seven churches, yet speaks to all. Moreover, there is one epistle to Philemon, one to Titus, and two to Timothy.’ He adds, ‘the epistle of Jude and two under the name of John, are in the possession of the church. There is an Apocalypse of John and one of Peter; the church receives only the former, that is, John’s.’ This statement, given at so early a period as the second century, is still extant. At the time it was written, thousands of men must have been alive, whose fathers were contemporaries of the Apostle Paul.

About 100 years after Origen, we have a catalogue prepared by EUSEBIUS, in an ecclesiastical history which is

still extant, in which all the books in our New Testament are enumerated, and no others.

A similar catalogue, prepared about the same time by **ATHANASIUS**, is also still extant, showing a similar agreement with our New Testament.

In a company some years ago, the conversation having turned on the frequency with which *quotations* were made by the early Fathers from the writings of the New Testament, it was remarked, that if the New Testament were lost, it could almost be restored by collecting and putting together these quotations. Struck by the remark, one of the Lords of the Supreme Court in Scotland who was present, resolved to ascertain if it were true ; and he succeeded to such an extent, as to satisfy himself that it was substantially true.

For ages before the invention of *printing*, the early Christians were in the practice of publicly reading, on the Sabbath days, the New Testament, just as the Jews were in the practice of reading the Old in their synagogues. This practice afforded a strong guarantee against the attempt to introduce any spurious book. **PAUL** refers to this custom in the close of his Epistle to the Colossians, chap. iv. 16, where he says, ‘and when this epistle is *read* among you, cause that it be *read* also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise *read* the epistle from Laodicea.’ **MARTYR** says, that in the second century, ‘on the day which is called Sunday, there is a meeting of all Christians who live either in cities or country places, and the memoirs of the apostles and writings of prophets are *read*.’ And **CYRIL** says, ‘avoid apocryphal books, and study carefully those only which are publicly *read* in the church.’

Add to all this, that the New Testament was early translated into various different languages, and that copies of the different translations have come down to us. The

language of the literary world in the time of the apostles was Greek, and the New Testament was originally written in Greek, as we still have it, with the probable exception, explained above, as to Matthew. The language next to the Greek was the Latin ; and Latin translations were also soon multiplied, and are extant. Then there remain copies of an old Syriac version of the New Testament, which the best scholars believe to have been made within the first century from the birth of Christ. On the whole, we have reason to rejoice that the books of the New Testament have come down to us in the very words of the original language in which they were penned by the apostles,—writing, as we shall show hereafter, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

No sooner was the gospel proclaimed by the apostles, than it encountered, as Christ foretold, the most determined opposition in every possible form. It was not only subjected to discussion of all kinds, but *that* having utterly failed, the infuriated enemies of the cross, armed with the sword, resorted to cruel and relentless persecutions.

The effect of the early discussions is worthy of being noticed. Fragments of the writings of two early infidels have come down to us by CELSUS, who lived less than 100 years after the apostles ; and by PORPHYRY, who lived 100 years after him. They both refer to the four gospels as existing, and as having been recognised before their time. In like manner, the EMPEROR JULIAN wrote a book, in which he erroneously alleged that John was the only one of the four evangelists who ascribed creative power to Christ. In his book the following admission occurs,—‘ John wrote later than the other evangelists, and at a time when a great number of men in the cities of Greece and Italy were converted.’ He further alludes to the conversion of Cornelius

and of Sergius Paulus, to Peter's vision, and to the letter sent by the apostles from Jerusalem to the churches, all of which events are recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.

Roman Catholics also have rendered good service here ; for they thought that no work would more certainly secure their admission into heaven, than the writing of a correct copy of the Bible ; and so, in cells and convents, copies were multiplied, till, from the fourth to the sixteenth century, their number increased not by hundreds but by thousands. They were engrossed with great care, lest by the slightest error the future reward should be forfeited. So great was the anxiety of the devotees to prevent the possibility of any one altering a single word of what they had written, that sometimes they counted and recorded how often each individual word occurred in each of the books of the Bible. Many of these old copies, written in various languages, before the art of printing was discovered, and illuminated with great beauty, are still extant ; some of them of a date so early as the first and second centuries.

We close this chapter in the words of the late Mr RENNELL :—‘ *When* was the canon of Scripture determined? It was determined immediately after the death of John. The canon of the gospel was indeed determined before his death, for we read in Eusebius that he gave his sanction to the three other gospels, and completed this part of the New Testament with his own. By the death of John, the last survivor of the apostles, the catalogue of Scripture was completed and closed.’ No one after his death ever asserted, and, still less, attempted to prove, that any subsequent writings were inspired. The next question, says Rennell, is, ‘ *By whom* was the canon of Scripture determined?’ He *answers*, ‘It was determined not by the decision of any individual, nor by the decree of any council, but by the general consent of the whole and every

part of the Christian Church. It is, indeed, a remarkable circumstance, that among the various disputes which so early agitated the Church, the canon of Scripture was never a subject of controversy.' The reason of this agreement, which he gives, is a very satisfactory one. 'Every one who is at all versed in ecclesiastical history is aware of the continual intercourse which took place, in the apostolical age, between the various branches of the Church universal. This communication, as NOLAN has well observed, arose out of the Jewish polity, under which the various synagogues of the Jews, which were dispersed throughout the Gentile world, were all subjected to the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem, and maintained a constant correspondence with it. Whenever, then, an epistle arrived at any particular church, it was first authenticated, and it was then read to all the holy brethren, and was subsequently transmitted to some neighbouring church.' We find also a direction of the Apostle Paul, that this epistle 'should be read to "all the holy brethren;" and again, that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans.' To prevent any mistake or fraud, the transmission was made by the highest authority, namely, that of the bishop. Through him, official communications were sent from one church to another. Clement, the Bishop of Rome, communicated with the Church at Corinth. Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna, wrote an epistle to the Philippians. Ignatius, the Bishop of Antioch, corresponded with the Churches of Rome, of Ephesus, and others. These three bishops were the companions and immediate successors of the apostles, and followed the system of correspondence and intercourse which their masters had begun. It is a very mistaken notion of Dodwell, that the books of the New Testament lay concealed in the coffers of particular churches, and were not known to the rest of the world

until the days of Trajan. This might be perfectly true with respect to the *originals*, which were doubtless guarded with peculiar care, by the particular churches to which they were respectively addressed : but copies of these originals, attested by the authority of the bishop, were freely transmitted from one church to another, and were thus rapidly dispersed throughout the Christian world. Peter, in one of his epistles, speaks of 'all the epistles of Paul,' as a body of Scripture universally circulated and known. Thus the canon of Scripture was formed ; there being no room for fraudulent fabrication on the one hand, or for arbitrary rejection on the other. The case was too clear to require any formal discussion, and it does not appear that, in these early days, there was any attempted forgery that could have rendered discussion necessary as to the authenticity of the New Testament Books. 'The writings of the apostles, and be it remembered of the apostles alone, were received as the Word of God, and were separated from all other writings by that most decisive species of authority, the 'authority of a general, an immediate, and an undisputed consent.' Rennell remarks, that all this would appear most satisfactory, if we take an example from modern times : and gives as an instance the well-known letters of Junius. Suspicious letters under that name appeared in addition to the original ones, but they were at once rejected by the literary world, while, of course, their appearance in no degree invalidated the original letters. All such attempts, like the fabrication of false coin, while they throw no discredit on what really is genuine, sooner or later end in detection. In the words of Rennell, 'we have the testimony of churches which were visited, of bishops who were appointed, and of converts innumerable who were instructed, by the apostles themselves, in favour of copies of the New Testament,

authenticated and preserved as no other books have ever been. To guard the integrity of the sacred volume was the bounden duty of every Christian, who believed that its words were the words of eternal life.'

Christ said, 'Search the Scriptures,' adding, 'they are they which testify of Me.'—John v. 30.

We cannot close this address, the details of which may have been fatiguing, without asking the sceptic, if unhappily there is one present, what more he requires to enable him to accept the Scriptures as the Word of God? We are willing frankly to admit the *reasonableness* of his testing their reliability in the severest possible manner. Is he not now satisfied—1st. That the Books of the New Testament were written by the persons, and at the times respectively represented? 2d. That their truthfulness was acknowledged, the instant they appeared, by parties who, at the time, knew, and were competent to decide, whether their narratives were true? And 3d. That these Scriptures have come down to us unadulterated, and entirely free from error?

Is it nothing, that the several books were written at different times—by different persons—in different places—that they embrace more than a hundred different miracles and other transactions, all given with a circumstantiality as to time and place, which laid them readily open to detection if false—that they reveal an exalted and faultless creed, without one instance of disagreement or discrepancy—without the slightest inconsistency or error among the different writers—and that they were accepted as true, by the parties who must have known if the narratives were false?

The sceptic evades answering this, by saying that all the writers were influenced by the same *spirit*. This is true; and it would be amazing—so amazing as to be

incredible—and is altogether unexampled even among truth-seeking, but uninspired historians—if we did not know that holy men of old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Being thus inspired, they necessarily must have agreed. Their truthfulness was unhesitatingly acknowledged by the early Fathers, some of whom lived in the days of Christ—saw Him—were acquainted with Him, and witnessed His miracles, and all the events of His life. Next in the links of the chain of evidence, come the writings of other men, who were the daily companions of the apostles and others, who lived in the days of Christ. Now, let us suppose, for argument's sake, that the writings of the apostles were false, would not these early fathers and their successors have rejected them with scorn? But what did they do? At the hazard of persecution and death they accepted them as true,—quoted from them—urged their acceptance everywhere, and suffered death rather than deny them. Thousands of early converts had equally the knowledge, or the means of ascertaining the truth, so that those who were addressed (and they soon became millions), as well as those who addressed them, were witnesses of the genuineness of the apostolic writings and the truthfulness of their narratives.

Think of Paul writing to the Romans—to the Corinthians—to the Ephesians—the Galatians—the Philippians—the Colossians—the Thessalonians,—and even to the bitterly-prejudiced Jews about what, if he wrote falsely, could readily have been detected; could he have hoped to deceive them?

Or is it credible that CLEMENT or POLYCARP or IGNATIUS or BARNABAS—all of whom were alive in the days of Paul—would have endorsed his assertions—quoted from them—and urged their universal acceptance—if they had been false? The commendatory quotations made by

the early fathers from the Apostolic writings, are so numerous that, according to TERTULLIAN, who lived about a hundred and fifty years after Christ, they exceeded in number all the quotations made at that period from the eloquent and far-famed orations of Cicero.

No doubt there were scoffers in those days, to whom Paul refers, even weeping ; but singularly enough they only strengthen the Christian testimony, seeing that they did not dispute the *facts*, but only the *inferences* from the apostolic narratives. Take one instance. Celsus, to whom we have already referred, and who lived 100 years after the apostles, denied the *purpose* for which Christ came into the world, but he did not deny the truth of the *events* of His life. He would have done so if he had dared, as *one* detected falsehood or imposition on the part of the apostles would have done more to arrest the progress of the gospel, than all the persecutions and cruelties and martyrdoms which were afterwards inflicted. The excited feelings of the enemies of the cross, as strong then as now, would not have allowed one error in *fact* to pass unchallenged. QUADRATUS, who wrote about seventy years after Christ, and who lived in the days of the Apostle JOHN, says—‘The works of our Saviour were always conspicuous because they were *real* ;’ and, after referring to individuals who had been healed of diseases by Christ, and who lived a long time afterwards, he adds, ‘that *some* of them have reached our times.’

Thus the writings of the apostles have come down to us unadulterated and protected by such an unbroken series of writings of friends and foes, that we believe he, who will not accept this evidence as complete, will not accept it, though, in corroboration, one should even ‘rise from the dead.’

SEVENTH ADDRESS.

THE HISTORY AND RELIABILITY OF THE ENGLISH
TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE.

BEFORE considering the inspiration of the Bible, it may be well to give a brief history of the English translation, to show that its substantial accuracy may be relied on.

So far back as the year 735, a monk of the name of BEDE translated John's gospel. Being seriously unwell, he dictated to a clerk. There is a tradition that before he reached the last chapter, the scribe seeing that Bede was dying, said, 'Father, there is just one sentence remaining ;' on which, in faltering accents, that sentence was dictated. 'I have written it,' said the scribe. 'It is finished,' said the dying man ; 'lift up my head, and let me sit where I have been accustomed to pray ;' and then adding, 'Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,' he expired. The language of this translation is so old, that though it *can* be read, it is nearly as unintelligible as Greek to the unlearned. It is, however, a valuable translation.

Fifty or sixty years afterwards, a monk called LINDISFARNE wrote beautifully in Anglo-Saxon a translation of the gospels, which is still preserved in the British Museum. Other copies written about the same time remain in different public libraries. This translation is also valuable.

The famous JOHN WICKLIFFE, who was born in 1324, made a translation of the Bible, not a perfectly accurate one, but sufficient to enable the people to comprehend

with accuracy the message of the gospel. As printing was not then known, he employed many clerks to make written copies, and some of these remain.

At length the art of printing was discovered. To that art we are probably more indebted than to all the other arts put together. It is the guardian alike of the Bible and our liberties. About this time, a discussion occurred between a popish priest and a poor tutor in the family of Sir John Walsh of Sudbury, near Bristol, about the expediency of making the common people acquainted with the Bible. 'Better,' said the priest, 'let the people be without God's laws than without the Pope's.' 'If God spare my life,' answered the tutor, 'ere many years, I will cause the boy that drives the plough to know more about the Word of God than either you or the Pope.' That tutor was WILLIAM TYNDALE. For his rash speech he had to fly to London. Finding it impossible or unsafe to execute his great work there, he went to Holland, and thence to Cologne, then celebrated for its printing establishment. There he began to print an edition of the New Testament. Discovering a conspiracy to seize him, he hastily fled to Worms, where Luther had obtained a footing. At Worms, in the year 1525, Tyndale printed the first New Testament in English, of which a copy is preserved in the museum of Bristol. Many copies were sent in bales of goods to England. They threw the whole country into the utmost excitement. They were condemned by the Popish Church, and some persons, who were detected having copies in their possession, were put to death, and others were imprisoned. On the 11th February 1526, a vast pile of Tyndale's New Testaments was publicly burned at the Cathedral of St Paul's in London, by a cardinal and thirty-six bishops of the Romish Church, in presence of many inferior dignitaries,

and a vast multitude of wondering people. The priests got these copies by seizing all they could discover in England, and sending agents to the Continent to buy others up. This last was like the work of an over-ruling Providence, and was the very thing Tyndale needed ; for he had been harassed by debts incurred in printing the Bible, and the money he now obtained by these sales enabled him to pay his debts, leaving over such a balance in his favour, as enabled him to apply himself to the printing with renewed vigour, and to distribute throughout England an amazing number of copies. Thus the fire kindled at St Paul's became an inextinguishable light, which soon shone over all England. Tyndale so exasperated the Roman Catholics, that at length they caused him to be treacherously entrapped and imprisoned near Antwerp, where two years afterwards, on 5th October 1536, he was executed, praying that God would open the eyes of the king of England. That prayer was soon answered, again we may believe by an over-ruling Providence, for through the instrumentality of Henry VIII., who, for selfish and criminal ends quarrelled with the Pope, the Papacy was overthrown in England. The printing of the Bible was then carried on with renewed vigour, under the superintendence of a succession of good and learned men. Printers and printing-presses were brought from the Continent to London ; and in 1537, the first copy of the Bible printed on English ground was issued. The victory was now won. During the last twenty years of the reign of Henry VIII., no less than fifteen editions of the whole Bible, and thirty-nine editions of the New Testament, and, during six years of the following reign, thirty-five editions of the New Testament, and fourteen of the whole Bible, were printed and published.

After this, the persecution of the bloody Mary began,

and a large number of the most godly and learned ministers of the Church of England fled to Geneva, where they employed their united efforts in preparing an improved translation of the Bible, to which CALVIN wrote an introduction. Numerous copies of this translation are still extant. Besides this one, another translation was made by the bishops of England, which went through no less than twenty-nine editions.

At length, soon after the accession of James to the throne of England, a conference of the leading clergy was held, which ended in the appointment of fifty-four men of learning and piety, for the purpose of preparing an entirely new translation. Death reduced the fifty-four to forty-seven. The Bible was divided into six parts, each part being assigned for translation to a separate class of these men. As each part was finished, the whole classes examined it, and it was not adopted till they all finally concurred in its accuracy. When the whole work was done, a copy was sent to London, where it was revised by six deputies. The executing of this translation occupied three years. It is the authorised version now in our hands. In it you occasionally meet with words printed in italic letters, to intimate that they are not found in the original, so that you may read or omit these words at pleasure; in most instances they are useless. The division into chapters and verses was done by the translators, for convenient reference, but it sometimes breaks the sense. For example, if the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah had begun at the 13th verse of the fifty-second, we would have seen the sense more clearly than we do by the present division, in which, the prophet is made to ask abruptly, 'Who hath believed our report?'

Nobody asserts that the translators of the Bible were inspired; but a good deal of discussion has taken place,

occasioned by the circumstance, that in copying and recopying old Hebrew, from copies of still older Hebrew—parts of it 3000 years old—trifling errors or obscurities have occurred which, as the language had long ceased to be spoken, might not be readily detected. The greatest difficulty consists in understanding Hebrew numerals, a point being liable to be mistaken for a blot, or the reverse. But it has been well observed, that ‘the true cause of wonder is, that discrepancies are so few and so trifling. Their insignificance in number and in importance, is a notable proof of a providential guardianship not exemplified in the translation of any other book. The same writer adds, that the translators of God’s messages have been preserved providentially, from material error. Not that there has been any exclusion of human fallibility, ‘but that there has been a wonderful care exercised ; so much so, that among some insignificant verbal errors, not one has been detected of any real importance, and not one which brings any fact or circumstance or doctrine, into the slightest doubt or uncertainty.’ We shall see immediately that the *original* scriptures were written under the immediate inspiration of God ; and if *that* be settled, there can be no doubt we have substantially accurate *translations* ; and scholars can still appeal to the original scriptures whenever any doubt occurs. The Hebrew being what is called a dead language, remains unchangeable ; and the polished and elegant Greek is likely to remain equally so.

EIGHTH ADDRESS.

DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE.

The Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words.—EXOD. xxxiv. 27.

That they may see, and know, and consider.—ISA. xli. 20.

HAVING given some of the proofs that the books of the Old and New Testaments were written by the persons and at the various periods indicated by them, the important question presents itself,—Were they written under *divine inspiration*? In other words, Do they really contain messages from God to man?

If it were the will of God to make *any* communications to the human race through chosen messengers, we would expect to find—

1. That God would enable His messengers to deliver the messages free from error.
2. That messages coming from God would be important.
3. That they would relate to matters which could not otherwise have been discovered; and
4. That the *fact* of their coming from God would be vouched by sufficient evidence.

Let us see whether these conditions concur in regard to the Bible.

1. As to the first—Were the messengers kept free from error?—Of course the messengers themselves could not possibly have been mistaken about their being inspired, if

they found themselves invested with superhuman power. A miracle is a fact, and not an opinion, which may be a delusion. It is a *fact* patent to the senses—to the eyes and ears of both those who perform it and who witness it—and thus knowing it to be real, both the actors and the witnesses must regard it as the divine sanction given to the word by which it is accompanied. Peter, who exercised superhuman power in open day, before wondering crowds, tells us that holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter i. 21); God's intentions would have become abortive if He had not preserved such messengers from error. In some instances they preceded the delivery of their messages by such words as these—'Thus saith the Lord;' and in evidence of its truth wrought works of superhuman power.

2. The transcendent importance of the Bible messages cannot be disputed. Its revelations not only relate to events of the greatest magnitude in this world, but to our welfare in the next, and throughout eternity. They tell us about God, our duties, and our destiny. They tell us how we may inherit eternal life.

3. The contents of the Bible could never have been discovered without a direct revelation. If they could, a most serious objection would at once present itself against the belief of their inspiration; because God does nothing needlessly. Such truths as God's plan of salvation by a divine Substitute, the influences of His Spirit, and life everlasting, must have remained for ever unknown to us, unless God had been pleased to reveal them. Bible truth then shone as a light in a dark place, when the most highly educated nations of the world were shrouded in heathen ignorance. Principal Campbell remarks, that the Greeks and Romans, who on all the subjects of human erudition reasoned like men, on the subject of religion prated like

children ; while the Israelites, in science and learning were children, and in religion were men. In regard to the doctrines of the unity, the eternity, and the omnipresence of God, and the singular combination of His wisdom, justice, and mercy, the Israelites, who had only the Old Testament, held a faith so singularly exalted and enlightened as to have occasioned the surprise of our most intelligent thinkers.

The New Testament is the development of the Old ; followed by the astounding fact, that Christ and a few fishermen—the latter of whom surely required the aid of divine inspiration—have effected the grandest moral and intellectual revolution which the world has ever seen. Wherever science flourishes, there reigns supreme the religion of the once despised Nazarene ! Wherever mental cultivation is highest, there, before His religion, it bends the lowliest. Wherever candour is exercised, it acknowledges frankly that His system of morals is absolutely pure and perfect.

Thus far the presumption surely is, that the Bible, which reveals what is of infinite importance, is divinely inspired. Still, we admit that direct and indubitable evidence is necessary. We admit that the evidence required should be of such a nature as could not be fabricated, in order to show that the messengers were neither deceivers nor deceived.

4. Let us, under this head, take a combined consideration of the following indisputable truths, viz. :—

1. That no alteration of God's natural laws can be accomplished except by Himself, or by those to whom He may be pleased to delegate the requisite power. To imagine a creature controlling an infinite Creator is a self-apparent absurdity.

2. If, therefore, we see any such alteration occurring,

we see the operation of the power of God, and no other power.

3. Accordingly, if any man, asserting inspiration were to deliver messages regarding matters of importance, which we could not have discovered of ourselves, and if we saw him wielding the extraordinary power of God, while delivering the messages in God's name, we would readily believe that God at the moment was working through him, and was vouching for his truth. In such circumstances we would be simply listening to the messages of God delivered by the voice of man. To assert that God might be working miracles through the man, when delivering false messages, would be blasphemy against God.

Having got this length, we would further expect that the messages would be of vast importance. And so they are.

4. The revelations of the Bible affect the interests of all generations of men while sun and moon endure, and throughout eternity. It was, therefore, necessary that they should be well vouched, and that their terms should be preserved free from corruption or loss throughout all time. And certainly we do not know, and cannot conceive, how they could be better preserved than (as we have seen they have been) by the intervention of writing. They could not be preserved for ever in perfect purity by mere tradition. The traditions of the Romish Church, so full of error, exclude that idea. Neither is it reasonable to expect a continuation of miracles for ever, because miracles, repeated in long succession, would appear like the result of occult laws, and fail to afford the proof required.

But the simple expedient of embodying the messages in writing meets the difficulty, and is consistent with a rule apparently adopted by God, of never unnecessarily employing miracles. By means of writing, His messages could be

preserved unchanged for ever ; and where they gave utterance to prophecies it enabled their truth to be verified by subsequent history. Accordingly, we know that from the first prophet to the last apostle, *writing* was the adopted mode ; and it cannot be supposed that God, who vouched, by miracles, His messages when delivered *verbally*, would be indifferent to their accuracy when they were being embodied into writing. We cannot suppose God controlling the verbal and disregarding the written message. We cannot believe that communications affecting the honour of God and the salvation of man to the end of time, would be left in a perishable form to a generation fast passing away. God *did* command His prophets to record in writing His revelations to them. It is said in Jeremiah xxx. 1, 2, ‘The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord saying, write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book.’ We read in Habakkuk ii. 2, ‘And the Lord answered and said unto me, write the vision, that he who runs may read.’ We have already noticed the numerous references in the New Testament to the Old Testament writings. Christ said, Search the Scriptures ; and only in their written form could Timothy have been acquainted with them from his youth. Several chapters of the Revelations commence with the words, ‘Unto the angel of the Church, etc., write.’

Furthermore, we would expect if the books of the Bible really were inspired, that, though written at different times through the long course of fifteen hundred years by a succession of men possessing the most varied attainments—among them princes, priests, and fishermen, learned and unlearned—there would be a substantial agreement among them, and this, notwithstanding that the matters revealed were as diversified as the characters and qualifications of the writers. Though they should embrace history, pro-

phesies, parables, and doctrines, if inspired, we would expect to find no inconsistency among them.

Now, it happens that all this is met, with perfect agreement, in the varied messages contained in the Bible. We are willing that they should be subjected to this test—a test as crucial as the infidel can demand. Everything throughout the whole Bible is clear, consistent, harmonious, and important. It tells of judgments threatened on account of sin, and fearfully executed ; and yet reveals God as a being of long-suffering patience and tender mercy, not willing that any should perish, but that all should turn to Him and live. The import of the whole Bible is in harmony with the angels' song of Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good-will from heaven to men. Those who dislike its message—and it *is* disliked, because it requires the regeneration of the heart and the renewal of the life,—would undoubtedly be glad if they could detect but one misstatement in fact, or one error or inconsistency in doctrine. But all such attempts have long ere now met their conclusive refutation ; and, as we proceed, we shall find increasing reason to say—

Great God, with wonder and with praise,
On all Thy works we look,
But still Thy wisdom, power, and grace,
Shine brightest in Thy Book.

Let everlasting thanks be Thine,
For such a bright display,
As makes a world of darkness shine
With beams of heavenly day.

In our next address we shall call your attention to the *evidence* that the writers of the Bible *were* divinely inspired, and that, on the strength of such evidence, the Gospel

spread rapidly over the civilised world — accomplishing great purposes ; above all, reconciling sinners to God, and bringing life and immortality to light. Strange results of the death of its Founder, who foretold that He would be put to death that we might live, that in this world His immediate followers would also meet persecution, and yet that His kingdom should ultimately be established over all the world !

NINTH ADDRESS.

THE DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.—2 Tim.
iii. 16.

IF the different books of the Bible were really written under divine inspiration, we would expect to find—

1. That the writers of the different books distinctly and unequivocally *averred* that they did write under such inspiration ; and

2. That what they asserted was proved to be true by the exercise of superhuman power on their part, submitted at the time to the most scrupulous tests, and immediately accepted, and acknowledged by competent judges.

In regard to the first—

1. Moses asserted that he had a direct mission from God to rescue the Israelites from Egypt : and both proved his mission and fulfilled it by means of miracles. The Egyptian tyrant succumbed before them. Thereafter the outstretched rod of Moses made a way through the sea for the Israelites, and overthrew their pursuers ! Then the ransomed host sang, ‘ Who is like unto Thee, O Lord—glorious in holiness, doing wonders : with the breath of Thy mouth the waters were gathered together, and the floods stood upright. Thou didst blow with Thy wind, and the sea covered the enemy. The Lord is our strength and our redeemer.’ Moses thereafter remained the national leader. His history of these wonderful acts

as written at the time, and while the people who lived new whether it was true or false. Unless it had been ue, that song or hymn of surpassing grandeur would not ave been composed in its commemoration, nor become national song. If the history was accepted by the whole Jewish nation at the time, without contradiction, as rue, and if the hymn was sung from generation to generation at religious festivals, can it be false?

Again, the thunders of Sinai had scarcely ceased before Moses published an account of how the Mount quaked greatly, as he received the Ten Commandments from God, n a voice exceeding loud, so that all the people that were n the camp trembled (Exod. xix.). Was this a fiction? Did all at the time accept it as a fact? Did no one contradict it? By no artifice could Moses have played any leception on a scale so grand.

Moses expressly and repeatedly claimed being inspired. He often preceded his statements by the words, Thus saith the Lord. He said God commanded him to write; and he obeyed. All the other prophets made statements of a similar import. To them God revealed or dictated His will supernaturally; and commanded them to proclaim broad what was so communicated. In their writings such words as, 'Thus saith the Lord,' constantly occur. The prophet ISAIAH expressly asserts, in chapter vi. 8, 9, that he 'heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send? Then said I, "Here am I." And He said, Go and tell this people.' The words, 'Thus saith the Lord,' occur n almost every chapter of the book of Isaiah. Such words occur also throughout the books of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and all the prophets. All the APOSTLES asserted that they were divinely inspired from the day of Pentecost, when 'they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utter-

ance.' These claims, vouched by miracles, were made explicitly and unequivocally; and are, therefore, either impiously false or absolutely true. If false, what do we make of the attesting miracles? and of the acquiescence and belief of the thousands who witnessed, and were immediately converted by them?

It may be that in recording their divine messages we may trace varieties in the style of the writers; but style does not necessarily affect the credibility of any message. We may even trace varieties of emotional feeling; but these may be produced by the nature of the different messages. The burning eloquence of Isaiah, the honest warmth of Peter, the glowing love and piety of John, and the cultivated logic of Paul, exist without the slightest admixture of error. We see such varieties exemplified every day among witnesses in courts of justice, which do not weaken, but, on the contrary, decidedly strengthen their testimony. There are, indeed, one or two passages in which Paul says, 'We write *this* not by commandment.' Of course these are acknowledged exceptions; but so far from weakening, they strengthen the claims to inspiration of the parts not excepted.

2. We come now to the great question—

Is the averment that the Prophets and Apostles were inspired, proved by unquestionable and superhuman evidence?

Each of us is bound patiently to examine the evidence, and to decide for himself. The decision is a solemn one, for our eternal salvation depends on it.

The first leading evidence which we shall notice is that which is afforded by a *long train of fulfilled prophecies*.

So far as these prophecies are concerned, we stand on vantage ground, compared with that of the ancient church. It witnessed many miracles; but in regard to prophecies

the generation that heard their utterance, seldom lived to see much of their fulfilment. We can contemplate both.

I.—OF PROPHECY.

Engaged in a lawsuit, a calm-headed litigant or legal adviser, accurately acquainted with the whole facts of a case, and well versant in the law, may correctly prophesy what will be the result of the litigation. But it would be simply ridiculous to say that any uninspired man could truly foretell that, many hundreds of years afterwards, two particular persons, with whom he could have no connection, would be born—would acquire certain estates—would quarrel, and go to law about them, and could describe the nature of the quarrel, and the issue of the law-plea—a law-plea which could not grow out of events in existence at the time of the prophecy. But God, who both foreknows and can regulate all events for the accomplishment of His own purposes, can do all this, and can proclaim them through His inspired messengers long ages before their fulfilment.

We request your attention to the following instances, premising that, in the case of MOSES, he not only foretold future events, but also proclaimed doctrines which, without Divine revelation, were beyond the research of human reason. Where, for example, if he had not been inspired, did he get the words, *Thou shalt have no other God but Jehovah*, at a time when a belief in a plurality of gods was universal? And why, unless Moses were inspired, did he announce this truth, when the history of the Jews proves that they would have been more submissive to him, if he had allowed them to worship gods like those of Egypt? And where did Moses obtain the pure morality of the Ten Commandments—commandments designed for all time and for all peoples? They were framed with unexampled wisdom,

combining universality, comprehensiveness, and brevity. Then look at his prophecies.

BEFORE the Jews reached the promised land, Moses *prophesied* (Deut. xxviii. 58), that 'If thou wilt not obey to serve to do all the words of this law (ver. 63) thou shalt be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. This was fulfilled by the Babylonish captivity.

Again, Moses prophesied that they would *thereafter* repent and return to the Lord, who would have compassion and bring them back to the land of their fathers (Deut. xxx. 1-5). This prophecy was fulfilled in the return of the Jews from Babylon.

In foretelling the final defection of the Jews, Moses wrote these words (Deut. xxviii. 49), 'The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the ends of the earth 'whose tongue thou shalt not understand.' In the Roman army which finally overthrew Jerusalem, there were Greeks and Spaniards and Gauls, as well as Romans, whose languages were unknown to the Jews. Moses added, in verse 50, that these invaders would not, regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young;' verse 51, and that they 'shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed;' verse 52, and 'besiege thee in all thy gates until thy high and fenced walls come down;' which was all executed by the Roman army. Verse 53, 'And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body: the flesh of thy sons and thy daughters,' 'in the siege and the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee;' verse 56, 'And the tender and delicate woman among you, who would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground,' her eye shall be evil toward her children, for she shall eat them for want, secretly in the siege. And so Josephus, who was in the Roman army under the command of Titus, when Jerusalem was de-

stroyed, tells us that 'wives snatched the food from their husbands, etc., and that the daughter of Eleazar was driven by hunger to kill her suckling babe, and, when she had dressed it,' she ate it. Moses added (Deut. xxviii. 64), what we know was fulfilled, 'And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people from the one end of the earth even unto the other. And (ver. 65) among the nations shalt thou find no ease, etc.

In Jer. xlv. 28, we read, in regard to what would intervene before the final destruction of Jerusalem, 'Fear thou not, O Jacob, my servant, saith the Lord; for I am with thee; for I will make *a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee*, but correct thee in measure.' And there are more than one prophecy to this effect. Accordingly, we may ask, where now are Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, Athens, and Rome? See Dan. ii. 31-45, vii. 17-20, viii. 1-26, xi. 1-15.

'The nations,' says Hartwell Horne (p. 43), 'that once shook the world with their arms, have in their turns disappeared, and mingled again with the common mass of mankind; but the Jews, though exiles in every country under heaven, and in every country oppressed, hated despised, . . . have yet, by a peculiar fate, of which the world affords no second instance, survived for more than eighteen centuries the loss of their country and the dissolution of their Government—have preserved their name and language, their customs and religion—in every climate of the globe; and though themselves not a people, have yet subsisted a separate and distinct race in the midst of every nation.' They are to this day the living memorials of the fulfilment of this prophecy. They are a standing miracle. They are the only thoroughly conquered and scattered people who have *not* lost their individuality. Rivers and drops of rain fall into the ocean and are lost; but the

Jews have mingled with the populations of the world, and have not been lost. This has no parallel in the world; while in the destruction of their enemies, in fulfilment of ancient prophecy, God's judgments have been equally remarkable. See also Hosea ix. 17; Jer. xxiv. 9.

Again, ZEPHANIAH uttered prophecies regarding NINEVEH at the time when Nineveh was 'an exceeding great city of three days' journey,' surrounded by lofty walls, so thick that three chariots abreast could be driven along their top—and weapons less destructive than our modern projectiles could not have injured it. At the height of its glory, ZEPHANIAH wrote (chap. ii. 13) that 'God will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness.' The main object of the book of Nahum (written about 100 years before the destruction of Nineveh) was to foretell the same event. After referring to its vast riches in silver and gold, and to the multitude of its great men and merchants, Nahum says (ii. 8) 'Nineveh shall flee away;' shall be 'empty, and void, and waste' (ver. 10); 'woe to the bloody city' (iii. 1). These predictions were so thoroughly fulfilled that its very site was lost for ages. It has only recently been found. The discoveries of Mr Layard also prove that the description given in the Bible of the grandeur of Nineveh is correct. See also Nahum i. 8, 9, ii. 8-13, iii. 17-19, and Zeph. ii. 13-15.

In the days of ISAIAH and EZEKIEL, TYRE was called by both of these prophets 'a mart of nations.' The former says its merchants were princes, and its traffickers the honourable of the earth. While in this condition, and on account of its vices and the injuries it had inflicted on God's chosen people, six special prophecies were uttered against it, viz :—

1. That it should be destroyed by the Chaldeans. At

the time of this prophecy the Chaldeans were scarcely in existence—they were an inconsiderable people. 2. That the inhabitants of Tyre should fly to the islands of the Mediterranean, and across it for rest, and not find rest. 3. That after seventy years Tyre should be restored, and acquire its earlier glory. 4. That it should be again destroyed. 5. That it should be restored again, and that many of its people should forsake idolatry. But, 6. That nevertheless, on account of its returning to wickedness it should be *finally* destroyed.

1. The first of these prophecies is found in Ezekiel xxvi. 7-11. It closes with these words, ‘He shall tread down all thy streets; he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground.’ Prideaux tells us that heathen historians narrate the fulfilment of this prophecy by the Chaldeans 125 years after it was uttered.

2. The second prophecy is found in Isaiah xxiii. 6—‘Pass ye over to Tarshish;’ ‘arise (ver. 12), pass over to Chittim; there also shalt thou have no rest.’ Chittim is explained to mean the islands and countries bordering on the Mediterranean; and Ezekiel (xxvi. 18) says, ‘The isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure.’ We learn from St Jerome, who gives it on the authority of Assyrian histories now lost, but which he says he read, ‘that when the Tyrians were besieged, after they saw no hope of escaping, they went on board their ships, and fled to Carthage and to some islands of the Ionian and Ægean Sea.’ They found no rest, however, because their conqueror pursued them, and they became unsettled, as recorded in ancient histories partially extant, and referred to by Prideaux.

3. The third prophecy is given by Isaiah (xxiii. 15-17), ‘And it shall come to pass that Tyre shall be forgotten

seventy years . . . and after the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as an harlot.' These seventy years bring us to the end of the time fixed for the destruction of the Babylonian empire ; after which Tyre recovered her pristine glory.

4. But 200 years after Isaiah—and, be it particularly noticed, after Tyre had *recovered* her former glory—ZECHARIAH prophesied in these words (ix. 3, 4), 'Tyrus did build herself a stronghold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets. Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and He will smite her power on the sea ; and she shall be devoured with fire.' She had, indeed, built herself a stronghold ; but Alexander the Great besieged the city, and took it, and set it on fire. As at the former, so after this destruction, the inhabitants fled to the isles in the Mediterranean and across it, as appears from the works of two Latin authors yet extant. Happy were they who thus escaped ; for of those who remained, 8000 were killed in the siege, 2000 were crucified when the city was taken, and 30,000 were sold as slaves, in fulfilment of another prophecy, 'The children of Judah and Jerusalem have ye sold ; behold, I will return your recompense upon your own head, and will sell your sons and your daughters.' (Joel iii. 6, 7, 8.)

5. Within a comparatively short time afterwards, however, the city was *again* restored ; and on this occasion many of its inhabitants forsook idolatry. 'A great multitude of people from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon' came to hear our Saviour (Luke vi. 17) ; and when Paul, on his way to Jerusalem, came to Tyre, he found disciples there, whereby the prophecy was fulfilled that after the destruction effected by Alexander, 'he that remaineth, even he, shall be for our God' (Zechariah ix. 7) ; and again, that 'her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord' (Isaiah xxiii. 18).

6. But the end came, not immediately, nor suddenly, but it came—‘Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against thee, O Tyrus, and shall cause many nations to come up against thee . . . and they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers . . . I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea . . . Thou shalt be built no more : for I, the Lord, have spoken it’ (Ezekiel xxvi. 3-5, 14). It is no wonder now that there are no certain ruins of Tyre to be found. It changed its masters often, as was predicted, and declined till it finally disappeared ; and travellers agree that what was the site of Tyre is now a rock whereon fishers dry their nets.

The whole twenty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel should be read with reference to TYRE. (See also Amos i. 9, 10 ; Zechariah ix. 1, 8.)

We shall notice additional prophecies in our next address, and will close the present meeting by simply observing, that such prophecies were miracles of foreknowledge, equally remarkable as miracles in nature, or of anything superhuman.

TENTH ADDRESS.

Egypt shall fall in the midst thereof.—Isaiah xix. 3.

It shall become the basest of kingdoms.—Ezekiel xxix. 15.

Unto us a Son is born—the mighty God—the Prince of Peace.—Isaiah ix. 6.

LET us now glance at EGYPT, one of the most powerful nations of antiquity. It held the Israelites in bondage for 400 years. Nevertheless, it was prophesied that it should be conquered—1, by Nebuchadnezzar; 2, by the Persians; 3, that—restored—it should be again conquered; and 4, that it should not be utterly destroyed, but become the *basest* of kingdoms.

1. That it should be conquered by Nebuchadnezzar. In JEREMIAH xlv. 13, we read, ‘The word that the Lord spake to Jeremiah the prophet, how Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, shall come and smite the land of *Egypt*,’ and in Ezekiel xxx. 10, 11, we read, ‘Thus saith the Lord God, I will also make the multitude of Egypt to cease by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; he and his people with him . . . shall destroy the land; and they shall draw their swords against *Egypt*, and fill the land with the slain.’ Two historians, who lived about 300 years before Christ, verify the fulfilment of this prediction; and Josephus says that Nebuchadnezzar, after successfully fighting with other powers, invaded *Egypt*, and slew the king who then reigned, and appointed another. Ezekiel (xxix. 12) says, ‘I will scatter the *Egyptians* among the nations,’ which was also verified by Nebuchad-

nezzar, who took many captives, while many others of the inhabitants fled to other countries.

2. After these events the PERSIANS conquered *Egypt*, as foretold by Isaiah in his ninth chapter. Our limits do not permit us to give circumstantial details. You may consult JEREMIAH xliii. 11, and EZEKIEL xxx. 13. The mode of attack on the first, or border-town of Egypt, was singular. We are told by Newton that the Persians succeeded by the stratagem of placing before their army a great number of dogs, cats, sheep, and other animals, which being held sacred by the Egyptians, not one of them would cast a javelin or shoot an arrow that way, and so the town was stormed and taken almost without resistance. The gods of Egypt were treated with marvellous contempt, the people were laughed at, and the priests were chastised for worshipping such deities.

3. The next memorable conquest was prophesied in the tenth chapter of ISAIAH, and we know historically that it was fulfilled by Alexander the Great.

4. A most remarkable prophecy is the fourth. It was nowhere said that EGYPT was to be destroyed *finally* like Nineveh or Tyre, but EZEKIEL prophesied (xxix. 15) that it should 'be the *basest* of the kingdoms, neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations;' and such we know has been the condition of Egypt for about 2000 years. Additional prophecies referring to Egypt, which in the course of her history were fulfilled, will be found in the 19th, 20th, 30th, and 31st chapters of Isaiah, and in different parts of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Joel, and Zechariah, too long for quotation.

We cannot undertake to refer specially to a tithe of the prophecies of the Bible. What we have given, and what we may yet give, must be regarded merely as *instances* of fulfilled prophecy. Group them together, and look at

them in combination, and they will be found more than enough to produce conviction, and certainly enough to induce us to examine the Bible for ourselves. Subject to this explanation, we proceed to remark, in regard to the JEWS and BABYLON, that

About twenty or thirty years before the Jews were carried captives into Babylon, JEREMIAH not only foretold that event, but also that the captivity would last for the specific period of seventy years, and that thereafter Babylon would be destroyed and the Jews recalled. Thus we read (chap. xxv. 11), 'Because ye have not heard My words, Behold, I will send Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, My servant, against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, . . . and this land (*i.e.*, the land of the Jews) shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon *seventy years*; and it shall come to pass when seventy years are accomplished, I will punish the king of Babylon,' etc.; and again in chap. xxix. 10, 'For thus saith the Lord, that *after* seventy years shall be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you in causing you to return to this place.' Knowing how the results accorded with these prophecies, one cannot read them unmoved. Seventy years are a considerable period before which to foretell events. But previous to the beginning of that time, Jeremiah, in his 50th and 51st chapters, not only foretold the captivity of the Jews, but he added with inspired circumstantiality that BABYLON should *thereafter* be destroyed; all of which was fulfilled.

In the days of ISAIAH, Babylon was the most splendid city then in the world. It occupied some fifteen square miles, embracing numerous palaces, and more than six hundred squares of buildings, besides hanging gardens. A branch of the Euphrates ran through it. Its supply of water

was inexhaustible. Its walls were loftier and broader than those of Nineveh. It had a hundred city gates, all made of brass. It was arrogantly called 'the queen of nations, that should abide for ever.' Nevertheless Isaiah truly prophesied (chap. xiv. 23) that it should 'become a possession for the bittern, and pools of water'—that a conqueror would turn aside the river and open its gates—and that God would 'sweep it away with the besom of destruction.' All of this, as we shall now show, was *literally* fulfilled.

1. CYRUS conquered Babylon, and transferred the Babylonian empire to the Medes and Persians. ISAIAH (chap. xlv. 27, 28), above a hundred years before Cyrus the conqueror was born, prophesied in these words, 'I will dry up thy rivers : CYRUS is my shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure.' Again (Isaiah xlv. 1), 'Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to CYRUS, . . . I will loose the loins of kings, to open before Him the two-leaved gates ; and the gates shall not be shut.'

2. The TIME when all this would happen was prophesied. Jeremiah (xxv. 11, 12) said that the Jews 'shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years ; and it shall come to pass when seventy years are accomplished, that I shall punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord.' In noticing the captivity of the Jews, we adverted to these seventy years.

3. OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES connected with the taking of Babylon were also foretold. Isaiah said (xxi. 2), 'Go up, O Elam (that is, Persia) ; besiege, O Media.' Jeremiah said (li. 11), 'The Lord hath raised up the Medes against Babylon to destroy it.' And, in accordance with the prophecies, history informs us that Cyrus commanded the united forces of Medes and Persians.

4. Various nations were to *unite* their forces under

Cyrus. Isaiah (xiii. 4), speaks of a 'tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together;' and history tells us of the vast gathering. Cyrus having saved the honour of a princess of great beauty, whom he had taken captive, her husband, out of gratitude, joined his forces to those of Cyrus, and fought against Babylon, as did various nations.

5. The drying up of the river was not likely to happen, for it was both broad and deep. Yet a prophecy to that effect was uttered by Isaiah in chap. xlv. 1-27, as well as by Jeremiah; and we know that Cyrus so turned the river that its streams became dry, and he thus obtained access to the city.

6. It was foretold that Babylon should be taken by assault suddenly, during night, at the hour of feasting, when the river should cease to flow, and when the city gates at the sides of the river should be left open; that the Babylonish troops would neither defend the citadel nor the palace; that the slaughter would be terrible; and that the city would be levelled with the ground. See each of these circumstances foretold in Isaiah xiii. 19; xiv. 22, 23; Jeremiah l. 13, 14, and 18; li. 11. The destruction of Babylon, in conformity with each and all of these predictions, forms an interesting chapter in Rollin's 'Ancient History.' So complete has been the destruction, that, in his day, the discovery of the site of Babylon baffled the most able geographers.

And now passing on to the days of DANIEL, who lived in the time of Jeremiah, we learn that when the Jews, in fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophecy, were in captivity in Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar was disturbed by a frightful dream, and that Daniel revealed both the dream and its interpretation — an interpretation which involved fearful prophecies, all of which were in due time accomplished.

While still in captivity, Daniel prophesied the rebuilding of the city of the Jews, and the time when it should occur; and also the exact time thereafter when CHRIST would appear, with various particulars connected with the coming of our Saviour, and the *subsequent destruction* of JERUSALEM. The last four verses of the ninth chapter of Daniel, written long *before* all of these events, run thus :—‘Understand the matter, and consider the vision. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.’ The restoration of the Jews and the atonement of the Messiah, were here predicted to be accomplished within the *seventy* weeks. The next verse proceeds thus :—‘Know therefore and understand, from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks and three score and two weeks (that is, sixty-nine weeks) ; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.’ The temporal promises as to the return of the Jews from Babylon, and the rebuilding of their temple and city, were exactly fulfilled at the specific time here foretold. The next verse proceeds thus :—‘And after threescore and two weeks shall *Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself*; and the people of the prince that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week, He shall cause the sacrifice, and the oblation to cease,’ and so on. The words, that the MESSIAH shall be cut off, plainly allude to His death. The words that He was to be cut off, but not for Himself,

indicate the atoning character of His death. The rebuilding of the city walls was accomplished by the end of the seven weeks of years. Messiah was cut off at the end of the sixty-two weeks of years ; and in the midst of the next seven weeks of years sacrifice ceased, Jerusalem being destroyed. We know what in prophetic language is meant by a week of years. It is explained in Ezekiel iv. 6, 'I have appointed thee each day for a year ;' a week of such days was therefore seven years. The jubilee of the Jews was calculated in the same way. It occurred after seven weeks of years, that is, after every forty-nine years. Conformably with this familiar mode of reckoning among the Jews, turn Daniel's prophetic weeks into periods of seven years each, and we get the exact time of the Messiah's death, and of all the other events referred to by Daniel who wrote more than 500 years previously.

The best reflection that can be offered on these instances of fulfilled prophecies are suggested by the words of Isaiah xlv. 21 ; xlv. 10—'WHO HATH DECLARED ALL THIS FROM ANCIENT TIME? Who hath told it from ~~tha~~ time? HAVE NOT I, THE LORD? I declare the end ~~for~~ the beginning, and from ancient times the things that ~~all~~ not yet done, saying, *MY counsel shall stand*, and I WILL ~~I~~ ALL MY PLEASURE.'

We shall now briefly advert to further fulfilled ~~PR~~PHECIES RESPECTING OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR.

No sooner had man fallen, than the first of a series remarkable prophecies occurs, that 'the seed of the woman ~~should~~ bruise the head of the serpent.' Again, in Genes ~~xxvi.~~ 4, God promised to Abraham 'that in *thy* seed ~~sha~~ all the nations of the earth be blessed.' Afterwards, Go ~~makes~~ this glorious promise more definite, by referring it ~~fulfilment~~ to one particular *tribe* of Abraham's descen ~~ants.~~ Genesis xlix. 10, 'The sceptre shall not depart from ~~fr~~

Judah, etc., until Shiloh come,' etc. Balaam recognised this in his prophecy (Numbers xxiv. 17), 'There shall come a star out of *Jacob*, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel.' Next, the prophecy is brought within a particular *family* (Isaiah xi. 1-5), 'And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of *Jesse*, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.' According to the flesh, Christ descended from David, who was a son of Jesse. (See also Isa. vii. 14.)

That this descendant of David was, in some mysterious sense, to be both God and man, is prophesied in Isaiah ix. 6, 'For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given : and the government shall be upon his shoulder : and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it (and so on), from henceforth even for ever'—words applicable to Him only, who, as a Prince and a Saviour, now sitteth on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Having thus predicted that the promised Saviour should be both God and man, Isaiah prophesied, in chap. vii. 14, that He should be born a *child*—'Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.' The *place* of His birth is foretold in Micah v. 2, written 750 years before Christ's appearance—'But thou, *Bethlehem* Ephratah (in the land of Judah), though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel ; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.' The occurrence of the decree of Augustus Cæsar, that all the world should be taxed, caused Christ's birth to happen in Bethlehem. To escape the massacre of the little children which occurred at Christ's birth, His parents fled with Him into *Egypt*, and thus

another prophecy, in Hosea xi. 1, was fulfilled—‘I called My Son out of Egypt.’ But it was still further prophesied that Christ should be called a *Nazarene*; and we know that this was accomplished through the unconscious agency of His enemies—His mother and Joseph, when returning from Egypt, having through the dread of the king turned aside and dwelt in Nazareth. That Christ should have a *forerunner* was foretold in Isaiah xl. 3, a prophecy which was repeated in Malachi iii. 1, who wrote 397 years before Christ, and was fulfilled, as mentioned in Matthew iii. 3. In Isaiah xlii. 1, 2, we are told that ‘He shall not cry,’ ‘nor cause His voice to be heard in the street,’ plainly pointing to a *meek* and *suffering* Redeemer. In Isaiah xxxv. 5, 6, we have the works of Christ referred to—‘The eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.’ We have foretold in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, that He was to be a *dying* and *atoning* Saviour, and yet that He should rise again and *reign* for ever, in words as minute and accurate as if they had been written after the event. The fact that Christ would be *betrayed* was also foretold in Psalm xli. 9, ‘mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread hath lifted up his heel against me.’ His *treatment* on His trial was predicted in Isaiah l. 6—‘I gave My back to the smiters and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting.’ The *mode of His death* was shown forth in Psalm xxii. 15, 16—‘The assembly of the wicked have enclosed Me: they pierced My hands and My feet’—a mode of putting to death not practised by the Jews when the Psalms were written. The *price of the treason* was foretold by the prophet Zechariah (chap. xi. 12)—‘So they weighed for My price thirty pieces

of silver.' Its disposal for 'the potter's' field was also foretold. In regard to Christ's treatment on the cross, His being mocked was foretold in Psalm xxii. 7, 8—'All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn: saying, He trusted in the Lord that He would deliver Him'—words fulfilled by Christ's enemies when they cried, 'He saved others, Himself He cannot save.' Again, in Psalm lxix. 20—'I looked for some to take pity, but there was none;' and so all His disciples forsook Him and fled—in verse 21, 'they gave Me also gall for My meat, and in My thirst they gave me *vinegar* to drink;' and so Christ on the cross received the vinegar from enemies, who little imagined that they were fulfilling the prophecies. And then Zechariah's prophecy (xii. 10) was fulfilled, that 'they shall look upon Me whom they have *pierced*.' His legs were *not* broken in fulfilment of another prophecy. What followed was foretold in Psalm xxii. 18—'They part My *garments* among them, and cast lots upon My *vesture*.' The *rich* man's grave into which His body was laid was also foretold, Isaiah liii. 9. But was that His end? Does prophecy leave Him in the grave? 'Who is this (asks Isaiah lxiii. 1-3) that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? I have trodden the wine-press *alone*, and of the people there was none with me.' We *now* can answer the question, Ought not Christ to have *suffered* these things and to enter into His glory?

These prophecies, and also the remarkable prophecies in Daniel, which are already referred to, naturally led to the general expectation that Christ would appear at the *TIME* and *PLACE* which He actually did. It was this general expectation that induced the wise men of the East to visit Jerusalem;—excited Herod's alarm, and led to his bloody decree to slay the young children;—and that prompted the scribes to send to John, to ask whether it

was he that should come, or if they were to look for another? How amazing the number and minuteness of these prophecies!—*nation, tribe, family, place, time of His appearance; circumstances connected with His birth; events of His life, trial, treatment, crucifixion, resurrection, and subsequent glory*—all foretold. All these prophecies have been preserved to us by Jews, Samaritans, and Greeks.

IS NOT THE BIBLE TRUE?

HAVE NOT 'HOLY MEN OF GOD SPOKEN AS THEY WERE MOVED BY THE HOLY GHOST?' 2 Pet. i. 21.

If the prophecies concerning Jesus Christ were all fulfilled in Him, prophecies *by Him* could scarcely be required to deepen our convictions. Nevertheless *they* are abundant.

He foretold the finding of the *colt* tied, and that *its* master should acquiesce in its being taken away (Matthew xxi. 2); that *Lazarus* would be restored from the dead (John xi. 11-23); that He, Christ, would be *betrayed* (Matthew xxvi. 24; Mark xiv. 18; John xiii. 21); that Peter would *deny* Him *three* times (Matthew xxvi. 34); that all would *forsake* Him and flee (Mark xiv. 30); that He would be put to death (Matthew xvii. 23); and that He would *rise again* (John ii. 19-22, etc.); He foretold the *destruction* of Jerusalem (Luke xxi. 1-23; Matthew xxiii. 34-38; Mark xiii. 14 to end). How minute the *last* prophecy, uttered seventy, and written fifty, years previously, 'Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.' Accordingly, Christ advised His disciples to pray that their flight might not be 'in the winter nor on the Sabbath-day.' When these prophecies as to the destruction of Jerusalem were uttered, no event could have been more improbable, because the Roman governor held Jerusalem with a force more than sufficient for the purpose; and it would not have been

destroyed but for a subsequent revolt that could not then have been foreseen by any merely human being. It was, moreover, improbable, though the revolt had been foreseen, because the Romans were not in the practice of designedly ruining any of their provinces. The prophecies of the misery attendant on the destruction of Jerusalem, as foretold by Christ, are very harrowing. They are detailed in Josephus, whose book was approved of, and ordered to be published by the conqueror. Christ, moreover, foretold that PETER would suffer a violent death, and that JOHN would long survive, as happened to both (John xxi. 18-23). He prophesied also that His followers would be *persecuted* (Mark xiii. 9-12); and that nevertheless His gospel would spread over the world, as it is doing (Matthew xxviii. 19, 20).

ELEVENTH ADDRESS.

*All things must be fulfilled which were written . . . in
Psalms concerning me (Christ).—Luke xxiv. 44.*

IN Bishop Horne's preface to the Psalms, we read as follows:—'The Psalms are an epitome of the Bible, adapted to the purposes of devotion. They treat occasionally the creation and formation of the world, the exodus of children of Israel, their journey through the wilderness and settlement in Canaan, their law, priesthood, ritual; the exploits of their great men wrought by faith, their sins and captivities, their repentance and restoration, the sufferings and victories of David, the peaceful and happy reign of Solomon, *the advent of Messiah*, and its effects and consequences, *His incarnation, birth, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, kingdom, and priesthood*; the effusion of the Spirit, the conversion of nations, the rejection of the Jews, the establishment, increase, and perpetuity of the Christian Church, the end of the world, the general judgment, the condemnation of the wicked, and the final triumph of the righteous with the Lord and King. These are the subjects here presented to our meditation.'

If there be any reasonable approach to truth in this quotation, of which there can be no question whatever, these Psalms afford abundant proof of their divine inspiration. The praises of God are no doubt their leading object, but they also corroborate the history of the ancient Church, and by their numerous prophecies—fulfilled, manifest

of them, *nearly a thousand years afterwards*—demonstrate that they could only have been written under the inspiration of God, who both foreknows what will happen, and can, in the exercise of His overruling providence, control all events, so as to bring about what He wills. They therefore form part of the evidences of revelation, besides being fitted to lead our devotions. They express our sinfulness and unworthiness, and the utter hopelessness of our being able to appear before God with acceptance, if we have nothing better than our own righteousness to plead; and they express the love and gratitude with which our hearts should burn towards Him who has done all for us. They tell us who our Saviour was, what He did, and why He suffered, where He now is, and what He is now doing at the right hand of God.

There is no doubt in the Psalms—only about seventy of which were written by David, the man after God's own heart—many fearful denunciations against enemies, which, to a cursory reader, seem to be hardly in accordance with the character of the loving and forgiving Saviour, and these cannot be comfortably sung by many pious individuals; but we must remember that David had a mission from God, who has a right to chastise nations for sin, and that we have no mission to punish any person whatever. Still, let us take our sins as our enemies, and thus spiritualised, the Psalms are not unsuitable to Christian times. David, besides, sinned fearfully. Let us imitate his deep and bitter repentance. Like him, let us cast ourselves on the mercy of God through Christ. We know a person who marked off special portions of the Psalms for private and domestic use. We do not quarrel with this, but it is not necessary; and we must never forget that the fulfilment of their prophetic and threatening portions puts them in the very foreground of Christian evidences. Their

inspiration as the Oracles of God, is expressly stated in different parts of the New Testament. Nearly fifty of the Psalms are either quoted from or referred to in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the Acts of the Apostles, in the Epistles of Paul and Peter, and by our Blessed Redeemer himself. Having said this, we have said enough to induce them to be studied as a safe guide to devotion and a sure basis of faith. It is intensely interesting to feel that these sacred melodies, accompanied with swelling music, sung by priests and people in Solomon's Temple, have come down to us in the very words which, for many long years, evoked its echoes.

We shall now refer to the Old Testament.

II.—TYPES.

In addition to all we have said, we may remark, that the ancient Jewish TYPES and CEREMONIES were virtually prophecies in the form of symbols, and that they were in thorough accordance with all those regarding Christ to which we have referred.

The Jewish High Priest, who offered up sacrifices for the sins of himself and the Israelites, was only a type of Him who was holy and undefiled, and who only needed to offer Himself once, not for His own, but His people's sins. The lamb without blemish, brought dumb to the slaughter, was the appropriate type of the sinless Lamb of God our Saviour. The ancient temple, with its gorgeous furnishings, was but the figure of a more glorious temple not made with hands. The blood shed by the Jewish priesthood could not cleanse the conscience, but it represented the shedding of that precious blood which put away sin, and has reconciled us to God.

We shall not dwell on this at present, though it is inviting, and would be profitable ; but we cannot close

this meeting without referring to the wonderful love and mercy of God to sinners, mingled with wisdom, in the vindication of the honour and justice of His law. All this is manifested in the plan of salvation. Great is the mystery of the incarnation. It could never have been conceived by us ; but it is revealed. How hateful must sin be in God's sight, when it required the blood of Christ to wash it away ! and how infinite was that love of God, which prompted Christ to take on Him our nature, and to dwell on earth with men from whose sins He recoiled, in order that, our sins being imputed to Him, He might redeem us by His death, and procure eternal life for us. Surely we should love and strive in return, to please Him who has done all for us. There can be no greater proof of our depravity and alienation from God than our remaining unmoved by the humiliation, death, and sufferings of His Son ; nor can any guilt be greater than ours, if, by indifference to mercy offered at such a price, we reject salvation. A due appreciation of God's mercy in Christ affords the best restraining influence against sin—the best stimulus to our being zealous in good works, and the best preparative for passing through the gate of death into the presence of Him to whom we must account for all the deeds done in the body.

This brings us to consider the evidence afforded by miracles, to which attention will be requested next Sabbath evening.

TWELFTH ADDRESS.

III.—MIRACLES.

*It is written in your law that the testimony of two men
is true.*—John viii. 17.

WE come now to consider the evidence of inspiration afforded by miracles.

The exercise of superhuman power by man must be a gift from God only.

Christ exercised such power in His *own name*; and therefore, in some mysterious way, Christ was in God, and God in Christ. He refers to this evidence of His divinity when He said to the Jews, Believe Me for MY WORKS' SAKE. His miraculous works were done daily, and openly, in presence of thousands. The blind saw, the lame walked, and the dead rose, at His bidding.

The question is, Are the witnesses who tell us all this credible? Their evidence was openly given, and it was so circumstantial as to admit, at the time, of its being readily contradicted if it were false. They tell us, for example, that Christ saw a man who was blind from his birth—a beggar—known to those who passed, as he sat begging, and that Christ said, wash and be healed, and he was healed. A severe examination took place regarding this miracle before the Sanhedrim, and the result was, not that no such miracle was wrought, but that Christ must have been a sinner because He wrought it on the Sabbath-day. A host of witnesses could obviously have destroyed this story if

it had been an invention. Again, Christ meets blind Bartimeus. The man's name is given—and his father's name is given—his residence is given—it was near Jericho—and he was well known to the passers by as he sat begging. Christ heals him at once by a word. The miracle was wrought publicly. It was accepted as a fact; and three of the evangelists have recorded it. Such a miracle *did* excite much observation, and the articulate details, given of it, laid it open to detection if it had not been true.' Opening the eyes of the blind and similar wonderful works were the special miracles which ancient prophecy announced Christ would perform; and, accordingly, when John sent his disciples to inquire whether Christ was the promised Messiah, His answer was, 'Go your way and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised' (Luke vii. 22). Imposition has often been attempted by wicked men, but there is a limit to all such attempts by established laws which cannot be contravened by human power. The religion of Christ is the only religion in the world which was founded on unquestionable miracles; and it is a sure foundation. Without going through the record of all Christ's miraculous works, we may advert to one or two. Look at His cures of the loathsome leprosy. A leper, worshipping Christ, says to Him, Lord, if Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean. Jesus answered, I will; be thou clean. And he instantly was cleansed. Shunned by all till that moment, the leper is no longer an object to be shunned (Matt. viii. 3). In the record of this miracle it is added, that the fame of Christ for working miracles had already gone throughout all Syria, and multitudes followed Him from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from beyond Jordan. The miracle was no deception. Three evangelists recorded it. Again,

Luke, chap. xvii. tells of ten lepers being cleansed, not by the administration of medicines, which in time might have wrought a cure, but instantaneously by the touch of Christ—in some instance by His word alone. Again, when Christ cured a helpless palsy-stricken invalid, who was carried to Him in a bed, the Scribes and Pharisees, watching what would happen, did not dispute the miracle, but reviled Christ for blasphemy, because He forgave the sins of the invalid. Christ's reply was, Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say Arise, and walk? They both required divine power. But that ye may know I have power to forgive sins, He desired the paralytic to arise, and take up his couch, and go into his house, which the cured man instantly did, so that they were all amazed, saying, we have seen strange things to-day. This was a public, well-attested, and circumstantial miracle wrought on a well-known man. On this occasion, the Doctors and Pharisees and Scribes who were assembled resorted only to the charge of blasphemy against Christ. The cures of the nobleman's son and of the centurion's servant are attended with all these circumstances of detail, publicity and circumstantiality. The father and the master were men of rank. The centurion is sufficiently designed by the statement that he had built a synagogue for the Jews in Capernaum. Could these miracles, if false, not have been publicly detected and exposed, and could they have imposed on the disciples, who narrate what they saw? Could three of these disciples have been deceived, who tell us that Christ walked to them on the sea, when their boat was about to sink, and that when He rebuked the wind, the waves were stilled? Or, were the disciples, and the multitudes deceived, whom Christ repeatedly fed, till they were filled, from a few loaves and small fishes? In the case of the man with the withered hand, the Pharisees who watched

Christ did not deny that the miracle was wrought—that was palpable to their senses—but, exasperated, they complained that it was wrought on the Sabbath-day ! Their malignity against Christ renders them credible. They were certainly competent witnesses of the miracle, and did not deny that it had been wrought. In the story of the raising of the only daughter of Jairus, the name is given as that of a man of station and in high authority at Nazareth. In that of the widow's son, the particulars are given of his being the only son of his mother, at Nain, who was a widow, and the miracle of restoring him to life was performed in presence of the funeral procession. In no shape or form could these narratives, if false, have imposed on any one—least of all could they have escaped detection at the instance of Christ's enemies. All these observations apply to the account of the raising of Lazarus. The reality of his death and restoration to life were indisputable. Christ had been warned against going at that time to Bethany, as 'the Jews sought of late to stone' Him there ; and goest Thou there again ? said His disciples—a result so probable in the eyes of Thomas that he said, 'let us go also, that we may die with Him.' So great was the effect of this transcendent miracle, performed in presence of a wondering multitude, that Christ, because His hour, though drawing near, was not yet come, was obliged immediately to pass from Bethany into Ephraim. It was then that the Chief Priests and the Pharisees took counsel together, and in consequence of this miracle resolved to put Him to death, not by attempting to prove that He was deceiving the people, but because He spoke blasphemy against God ! They did not put Him on His trial for being a fraudulent impostor. They did not make, far less attempt to prove, any such charge ; but in their Council they said, Art thou the Christ ? His answer was, 'Here-

after shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.' Then said they all, 'Art thou then the Son of God?' He replied, 'Ye say that I am'—an idiomatic expression for saying emphatically—*yes*. And then they said, 'What need of any further witness? for we ourselves have heard out of His own mouth.' And so He was condemned by His enemies, not for fraud or imposition, but for blasphemy.

It was necessary that Christ's wonderful works should be performed openly, to prove His Messiahship; yet they seem at first to have been performed, as we might say, unostentatiously, in order that civil rulers might not have been prematurely alarmed, as if He had come to render Himself a temporal king. The purpose for which He came into the world was not to reign, but to die; and as the time of His death drew near, His miracles increased in publicity and splendour till they culminated in His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, where He told His disciples, that in two days after that triumph, He would be betrayed, and crucified, as He truly prophesied.

The apostles not only witnessed and recorded the miracles of Christ, but they themselves also wrought miracles—as to which they could not be deceived. The Apostle Paul refers to the mighty signs and wonders which he had wrought, Rom. xv. 18, 19, and 2 Cor. xii. 12. But there was this difference between the miracles of the apostles and those of Christ, that the apostles acknowledged they did not possess independent, but only delegated, power. They did not work miracles in their own name. Their miraculous works were sometimes preceded by prayer to God, as in the instance of Peter raising Tabitha from the dead (Acts ix. 40); and sometimes they were preceded by such words as these, 'In the *name* of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk,' as Peter said

Acts iii. 6. Paul makes the express assertion, in Romans xv. 18, 19, and 2 Corinthians xii. 12, that miracles were the signs of an apostle. They were the credentials of the messengers. They occurred in vast numbers; hosts of sufferers were relieved in the presence of thousands of witnesses, in open day, on the public streets, in the temple, before learned and unlearned, scientific and ignorant men—while enemies watched. Moreover, the nature of the miracles brought them within the comprehension of all classes. That all should have been deceived, including the lame, the paralytic, the blind, the deaf, the very dead themselves, is impossible. Accounts of these miracles by the apostles were published, when both the subjects of them and the witnesses were alive; and the accounts were at the time unchallenged, and accepted as true.

After the great end of miracles was accomplished, they ceased, else by continued repetition they would have failed to appear miraculous, and consequently would not have proved anything.

The only remaining question is, Are the *witnesses* who attest the miracles credible? Their testimony was openly given and was not contradicted, which, at the time, it could easily have been, if it had been false. We have already referred to the Apostle JOHN, who wrote what might be called a dying declaration. Take PAUL for another witness. He was a learned man and a man of authority. At first he distinguished himself by persecuting the Christians; but was converted by overwhelming evidence. Was that evidence a mistake? Could he be mistaken as to the fact that he was himself struck blind, and remained so for several days, and was thereafter miraculously cured? Did he gain by his conversion? It could not have been produced by the love of power—that he abdicated: nor by the love of wealth—that he

forfeited : nor by ambition—that was blasted : nor by the love of ease—in every place bonds and afflictions awaited him : nor by the love of life—for he perilled and lost it, rejoicing in a glorious hereafter. His life was entirely unselfish. It was the souls, not the properties, of his hearers he desired to gain. He was either a senseless and scandalous impostor, or a thoroughly reliable witness. He could not possibly be both. In any court of justice such a witness would be perfectly reliable. He staked his own salvation on the reality of Christ's resurrection. He frankly admitted that 'if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain ;' but having recapitulated the evidence of the fact, including his own direct and personal testimony, vouched by miraculous deeds done by himself, he triumphantly exclaims, 'but now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.' Adding, 'last of all He was seen of me also.'

Turn to PETER. Under the mistake at first of thinking that Christ was to be a temporal deliverer, he not unintelligibly, on the failure of that expectation, forsook Him and fled. But the resurrection opened his eyes, and thereafter he preached the gospel in such words as these :—'Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you ; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are *partakers* of Christ's sufferings.' 'Committing' their souls to Him, 'in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator' (1 Peter iv. 12-19) ; and so, after testifying to Christ's resurrection, PETER HIMSELF SUFFERED, and thus became another unexceptionable and most reliable witness. We need not multiply such instances. Some of these witnesses—there was 'a cloud' of them—were tortured, 'not accepting deliverance ;' others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, bonds

and imprisonment; they were stoned and beheaded; they were sawn asunder; they wandered about destitute, afflicted, tormented.

CLEMENT, the associate of Paul, says that Peter 'underwent not one or two but many sufferings, till at last he was martyred. For the same cause Paul in like manner suffered; and not only men, but women also, suffered grievous and cruel punishment, with firmness.' POLYCARP, the disciple of John, gives similar testimony. IGNATIUS, the contemporary of POLYCARP, speaks of those who had felt and handled Christ's body after His resurrection, and thereafter despised death; and the Church of Smyrna, soon after the martyrdom of Polycarp, recorded that they could not 'but admire the greatness of their minds, and that admirable patience and love of their Master which then appeared in them, who when they were so flayed with whipping that their frame and structure of their bodies were laid open to their very inward veins and arteries, nevertheless endured it. In like manner, those who were condemned to the beasts underwent many cruel torments, . . . that if it were possible, the length of their sufferings might have brought them to deny Christ.' These are instances of the courage, the constancy, and the fate of the early Christians; and yet God at no time left Himself without a witness. On the contrary, even under such trying circumstances, the progress of the gospel was so rapid, that from its preaching at first by a few uneducated but divinely-inspired men in the face of persecution, it was accepted over the whole civilized world. Its converts were found in Cæsar's household.

We have not on this occasion specially referred to the miracles in OLD TESTAMENT times. Nor is it necessary. They were wrought so publicly as to be open to every conceivable test—they were recorded circumstantially, so

as readily to admit of contradiction if spurious—and the account of them at the time was universally accepted as true by those who witnessed them. All our remarks on the miracles of the New Testament times are equally applicable to those of the Old.

We here pause for the present.

THIRTEENTH ADDRESS.

THE RESURRECTION.

But now is Christ risen from the dead.—1 Cor. xv. 20.

FOLLOWING up the subject we were considering, at our last meeting, we shall now make a few further remarks on the great and crowning evidence of the truth of the Gospel, namely, CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

In creating the world and establishing what are called the laws of nature, God wrought stupendous miracles. He was necessarily above them, and could alter them at His pleasure; so that the question is, not whether God *could*, but whether as prophesied, God *did* raise Christ from the dead? The fact of so many other miracles having been previously wrought, should prepare us to believe the evidences of Christ's resurrection.

The blood and water which issued from His pierced side, proved that He *was* dead. His enemies dreaded that He *might* rise again, as He had foretold; and hence they placed a stone and a guard of Roman soldiers over His grave. To sleep on their watch was death—that they should *all have slept*, at the *peril* of their lives, is incredible—The stealing of the body in these circumstances was hopeless, and was not attempted by feeble women and those who 'forsook Him and fled.' And yet, friends and foes admit that on the Sabbath morning the body was nowhere to be found; and the soldiers were *not* punished. It is not said that they were ever asked any questions on

the subject. MARY hastens from the grave to the disciples with the glad news that she had seen the Lord. Christ then appeared to TWO of them on their way to Emmaus; and next to TEN, to whom He showed His wounded hands and His feet. He then appeared to the eleven; the doubting THOMAS being now present, exclaiming, as He saw Christ's wounds, 'My Lord, and my God!' At the Sea of Tiberias, Christ taught the disciples that they were now to enter on their great work. Afterwards He was seen of FIVE HUNDRED PERSONS at once, of whom the greater number were alive when the Epistle to the Corinthians was written; and He finally ascended up into heaven, in presence of ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY witnesses. This great event, recorded by the four evangelists, and by Paul, James, Peter, and Jude—in all eight writers—would, if it had been false, have met the prompt denial of the one hundred and twenty, and the five hundred witnesses, and been speedily treated with the contempt of a detected imposition. But its truth being undeniable, three thousand persons on an early day, and five thousand on another, were converted; while the disciples, who had all forsaken and fled from Him at his death, now stood boldly forth in defiance of the whole world, proclaiming by inspiration, in the languages of the Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and of the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and Judæa, and Cappadocia, of Pontus and Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Rome, and Arabia, that God had *raised up Jesus from the dead*.

Compare any case of imposition with this: Let any man tell us now, that some one who died a few days ago in this city and was buried, is alive, and was seen by about six hundred witnesses, not one of whom could be adduced—what would we think of him? We would neither hate nor persecute him, we would simply laugh at

him ; but over the proofs of Christ's resurrection tens of thousands pondered and believed. Wicked men did not laugh. They hated, and persecuted—they tried the dungeon and the lash, the rack, the sword, and the faggot. In the face of all this, 'Woe is me (said Paul) if I preach not the gospel of Christ ;' and 'should I obey men rather than God ?' asked the once cowardly, now courageous Peter. A guilty criminal, with a violent and shameful death before him, will write imploring his children to take a warning from his miserable end. But, 'stand fast, my son,' says Paul to Timothy. 'I am now ready to be offered.' My example may bring you to the same cruel end. Nevertheless, 'I charge thee before God, STAND FAST, preach the word.' The light afflictions of this life 'will work out an exceeding, even an eternal, weight of glory.'

One of the ablest Frenchmen, whose skill preserved him in great official power, through many changes both of Governments and dynasties in France, on being consulted by infidels about the introduction of a new religion consonant with wild revolutionary ideas, said, 'Jesus Christ, to found His religion, suffered Himself to be crucified and ROSE AGAIN, and *you* should FIRST try to DO AS MUCH.'

Another eminent French statesman lived to lament that the resurrection of Christ had been disputed by the infidel Voltaire, because he wished peace and purity in his family. 'I felicitate myself,' he added, 'that my wife is a Christian, and I mean my daughters to be brought up Christian women. The demolishers of Christianity DON'T know what they are doing—it is not upon our churches, but upon our *homes*, that their blows are levelled.'

It is well to know that historical evidence of the truth of the miracles, and of Christ's resurrection, exists independently of the writings in the Bible. The CLEMENT, who is referred to by Paul in Phil. iv. 3, wrote a book, still

extant, in which he says—‘assured of Christ’s resurrection, no persecution will induce us to renounce our faith.’ And POLYCARP, the companion of the Apostle John, also wrote a book, still extant, from which we quote the following three separate sentences, viz., ‘He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also raise us up.’ Again, ‘Imitate the noble example of Ignatius, and Zozimus, and Rufus, and Paul, and the rest of the apostles, for they loved not the present world, but Him who died and was *raised again by God for us* ;’ and again, ‘May God the Father grant you a portion among the saints, and to all who believe on our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Father, who *raised Him from the dead*.’ This Polycarp suffered martyrdom. He was offered his life if He would blaspheme Christ; but he replied, ‘eighty and six years have I served Christ and He has never done me wrong. How can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour.’ The fire was thereupon kindled.

Many other early writers give similar testimony to that of Polycarp, so that, although the Bible were lost, Christ’s resurrection, and the miracles wrought by Him and His apostles, could be vouched by *other writings, still extant*, of individuals who were the companions of the apostles. Some of these writings breathe so much of the spirit of the gospel, that the early church might have been almost excused if it had admitted them into the sacred canon. But happily this was not done. The early church admitted only such writings as came from the hands of the *inspired apostles themselves*. Still these other writings, such as the writings of BARNABAS and CLEMENT, both mentioned in the New Testament, afford satisfactory corroborative evidence of the truth of the resurrection.

We have no wish to avoid, but would rather answer certain statements which are now put forth with the view of explaining away the fact of Christ’s resurrection. It is

better that you should be prepared for them. These statements are neither new nor true. It was first said that Christ's resurrection was only a *spiritual* one—a vision, in short. An advance was then made by saying, that all that was meant by the sacred narrative is the *revival* of Christ's *doctrines*, after they were supposed to have been destroyed by His death. But the statements in the Bible are direct and explicit, and must be taken as either true or false. No doubt, if it had been the divine will, the body of Christ might have been left in the grave, while His doctrines should survive. But the question is—Will the sceptics undertake to prove that such was God's purpose; and overcome, by contrary proof, the evidence of the resurrection? It will not do to explain away direct evidence by substituting unvouched fancies. The Bible narrative is, that Christ rose from the dead, in accordance with ancient prophecies. It was foretold that He would assume our nature, die for our sins, rise again for our justification, and appear as our advocate at the right hand of the Majesty on high; and He promised to meet His disciples when He was risen again. He himself seems to have anticipated the sceptical doubts to which we refer; for, on His appearing to the eleven disciples after His resurrection, 'He said to them (Luke xxiv. 38-43), why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it *is* I myself: handle Me, and see; for a *spirit* hath not flesh and blood, as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and *wondered*, He said unto them, have ye here any *meat*? And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it, and did *eat* before them.' He thereupon (verse 45) 'opened their understanding, and said to them (verse

46), thus it *behoved* Christ to suffer, and to *rise* from the dead the third day.' On another occasion also, after His resurrection, He said to His disciples, 'Come and *dine*.' (John xxi 12.) And Peter, in one of his sermons after Christ's ascension, said (Acts x. 40, 41), 'Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did EAT and DRINK with Him AFTER He rose from the dead.'

Try to explain away all this as sceptics may, there is no way of accounting for the fact, that all the eleven disciples who, on Christ's apprehension and death, became terror-stricken, and fled, just as suddenly, on Christ's reappearance, recovered from their panic, and, with swelling bosoms and glowing hopes, became united and brave, except on the hypothesis that the crucified One, in His bodily form, was alive in their presence.

But further, God has been pleased to reveal to us some of the *purposes* for which Christ rose from the dead. 1. One of them was to show that He had accepted Christ's finished work. 2. Paul, in his sermon on Mars Hill, told the Athenians that God had appointed that the world should finally be judged by Jesus Christ, of which 'He hath *given* ASSURANCE unto all men in that He hath raised Him from the dead.' 3. Another of God's purposes (1 Cor. xv. 23) was, 'That Christ by His resurrection from the dead should become the FIRST FRUITS of them that slept—for since by one man came death, by man (the Christ) also came the resurrection of the dead; 'for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,'—not, indeed, with corruptible bodies (verse 53), for flesh and blood like ours 'cannot inherit the kingdom of God,' 'but we shall all be *changed*, for this corruptible must put on incorruption,' and then 'Death shall be swallowed up in victory.'

We shall now notice how rapidly the Gospel spread

over the world, and that at a time when the question of its truth was open to every kind of reasonable test.

Tacitus, a Latin scholar, writing about the fire at Rome in the time of Nero, within thirty years after the time of Christ, says, that nothing Nero could do being sufficient to remove the suspicion that he had himself caused the fire, 'he laid the guilt, and inflicted the most cruel punishments, upon a set of people . . . called by the vulgar, Christians. The founder of that name was Christ.' He adds, that the belief in Christ had spread not only over Judæa, where it originated, but through Rome also. 'A vast multitude were apprehended, who were convicted, not so much of the crime of burning Rome, as of hatred to mankind!' and were put to death, either disguised in skins like beasts and worried by dogs, or crucified, or wrapped in pitched shirts and set on fire to illuminate the gardens at night. Some apologists say they were put to death *before* being burned; but in either case the *number* of the sufferers was very great. Another Latin author, PLINY, wrote a letter to Trajan a few years afterwards, saying, 'There are many of every age, and of both sexes,' who had become Christians, nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but 'smaller towns also, and the open country.' PALEY says, that other Roman testimony not only supported that of Pliny, 'but went also to another point; that the deaths of these men were martyrdoms in the strictest sense—that is to say, were so voluntary, that it was in their power, at the time of pronouncing the sentence, to have averted the execution by consenting to join in the heathen sacrifices,' which they refused to do.

Thirty years after Pliny, and only 106 years after Christ's resurrection, JUSTIN MARTYR wrote—'There is not a nation, either of Greek or barbarian, or any other

name, even of those who wander in tribes, or live in tents, amongst whom, believers in 'the crucified Jesus,' were not to be found.

And fifty years after Justin Martyr, TERTULLIAN wrote to the head of the Roman empire, in these words:—'We (that is, the Christians) were but of yesterday, and we have filled your cities, islands, towns, and boroughs; the camp, and the senate, and the forum.' In another part of his writings, he says that Moors, Africans, Spaniards, Gauls, and even some of the inhabitants of parts of Britain, inaccessible to the Romans, had yielded to the power of the Gospel.

And ORIGEN, who follows Tertullian by only thirty years, mentions that 'throughout all Greece, and in all other nations, there are innumerable and immense multitudes . . . who have given themselves up . . . to the religion of Christ.' And in less than eighty years after this, the Roman empire itself, under CONSTANTINE, became Christian. A writer, shortly before Constantine's accession, tells us that 'men of the greatest genius— orators, lawyers, and physicians—had come over to the (Christian) institution in the face of threats, executions, and tortures.' Thus, in spite of persecution, Christianity rapidly expanded itself into a great power over the world. It spread not like that of the Mahomedan warrior, by the sword, but in spite of it; and it was not confined to one country, but extended till it achieved a peaceful and enduring triumph.

It is not necessary to pursue this narrative any further.

'Who are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?' 'These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in

His temple : and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of waters ; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes' (Rev. vii. 13-17).

We shall advert to some of the *internal* evidences of Christianity at our next meeting ; and, in the meantime, briefly advert to the twofold obligation laid on us, in consequence of the sufferings and death of Christ.

1. The first is that we should love Him who first loved us ; and—

2. If our love be real, it cannot be confined within our hearts as a mere sentiment. It must flow out in generous action, as Christ's did on earth, and as it is still doing in heaven, as our Advocate and Intercessor. The last expression of His love on earth was that the gospel should be preached till He be satisfied with the number of the redeemed. His love makes a large demand on our gratitude, and should impel us to *work* as He did. His work was the greatest the world ever saw. From all eternity it had been hid in the bosom of His Father ; and when at length it was unfolded, it filled angels with wonder, and will inspire eternity with praise. It will be carried on, till it sheds over the world the blessings which evoked the angels' song at His birth. It is an honour conferred on His followers, that Christ invites their agency. Our several spheres may be limited, and our best efforts feeble ; but let us all try to do what *we can*, to recommend the Gospel ; and Christ will, on *that very account*, regard it as having been done to Himself ; while the toils of those who spend their lives in the evanescent pursuit of wealth and pleasure, will be regarded as worse than of *no account at all*.

FOURTEENTH ADDRESS.

The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation.—
Rom. i. 16.

IV.—THE INTERNAL EVIDENCES.

BEFORE considering some of the internal evidences, we may remark, that in our former observations we have not rested either on tradition, or on those spiritual impressions which the diligent study of the Bible is fitted to produce. On the contrary, we have hitherto rested mainly on the fulfilment of numerous early prophecies; and on miracles, which were continued, until the closing of revelation no longer required their evidence. In passing, it may be noticed, that none of the early Fathers ever pretended that *they* could exercise any superhuman gift, though they bore ample testimony to its exercise by their inspired predecessors. And as to the pretended miracles of the Church of Rome, they *have* often been detected, and none of them can stand for a moment before the slightest intelligent investigation. Another preliminary remark is, that we do not ask you to look only at a few fulfilled prophecies, or at a few miracles, however well authenticated, because, in doing so, you would not realise the effect which a combined view of the whole is fitted to produce. Their vast numbers were required to secure conviction. We must therefore try, as it were, to grasp the whole. The fulfilment of a single prophecy, or even of a considerable number, might have been accidental; and a few miracles

might be supposed to have been insufficiently tested ; but when we contemplate their vast number, and their minute circumstantiality, a conviction is produced which cannot be shaken. Take a combined view only of those prophecies to which we have adverted, which apply personally to our blessed Lord, and we will search in vain through all past history to find any individual, except Himself, to whom they all could point. Only one Being ever appeared in this world, in whom, as Paul told Agrippa, all the things spoken by Moses and the prophets '*did come to pass*'—only the ONE, of whom it is written that He should suffer and rise from the dead, and show light to the people and to the Gentiles '*which sat in the region and shadow of death.*'

We shall now notice only some of what are called the internal evidences of Christianity, produced by the *conviction* of its truth.

As our loving Creator has abundantly supplied our bodily and temporal necessities, and has given to us souls of almost boundless capacities and desires, it was consistent with His gracious character that He should also supply our spiritual and eternal wants. Nothing short of a revelation from Himself could do this. The sages of past time indulged in all kinds of speculations, but they do not satisfy us. The Bible alone has brought life and immortality to light ; and thus it affords to those, who prayerfully study it, very satisfactory internal evidence that it has come from a higher than any human source.

The books of which it is composed, above sixty in number, were given to the world in different ages by some forty writers, and they all agree with miraculous harmony. They display a perfect standard of truth. They constitute a thoroughly precise and accurate rule for human life, enforced by the loftiest motives ; and they have exercised

an enduring influence over individuals and nations, altogether unexampled in human history.

We read in Titus ii. 11-14, that 'the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath *appeared* to all men, *teaching* us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.'

In this quotation we have a display of the internal POWER of the Gospel. The peculiar prerogative of the Word of God is to reveal what immortal beings require to know—to change the heart, and reform the life. It is addressed, without distinction, to the unlearned as well as the learned; it inculcates the duties which they owe to God, to themselves, and to their fellow-men; and it enforces its lessons, by presenting exalted motives and eternal rewards. In the best of all senses, it can transform the most depraved into a 'peculiar people, zealous of good works.' Such is its POWER. Paul calls it the power of God (1 Cor. i. 18), and the wisdom of God (ver. 24).

But to be felt, the gospel, as a rule, must be studied. The Bible does not work like the charm which the ignorant savage binds on his person. No doubt, its triumphs are often unlooked for and complete; but, in general, it claims to be searched; and our Saviour gives this encouragement to the anxious and prayerful enquirer, that the aid of God's Holy Spirit, if asked, *will be given to help him*. None, therefore, have a right to say that they *cannot* feel the power of the gospel. Their insensibility is their guilt; and it is aggravated and perilous guilt. If a man,

with the application which the earnest student devotes to science, will study his Bible, adding earnest prayer for Divine illumination, he will assuredly receive internal evidence of its truthfulness, and eventually will *experimentally* feel its *power*. He will feel its power to *instruct* (Neh. ix. 20); its power to *guide* (Psa. cxliii. 10); its power to *witness* with his own spirit that, under its influence, he has become a child of God (Rom. viii. 16). God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him (Heb. xi. 6), and will 'lead and guide them in the way of truth.' They will feel the change produced within them, as Paul felt it, when, on his way to Damascus, 'he fell to the earth.' Such a change is known and felt, just as we see and feel the light and warmth of the noonday sun. It is an experienced *fact*. It has kindled love to God, and a dislike of sin; it has given the assurance of faith, and expelled infidelity; it has irradiated futurity, and dispelled its gloom; it has destroyed vain-glorious self-righteousness, and given rest on an all-sufficient Saviour, and a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Some may call this fanatical, and it may be a mystery; but the changed man knows it to be a fact. All kinds of life are mysteries; but we *know*, as a fact, that we live without inquiring how we came to live; and only an insane man doubts it. In like manner, the power of the gospel may be a mystery; but the subject of its divine power feels and *knows* it. This is indeed a great change. *Before* this change he may have been regardless of truth—ready to overreach his neighbour—given to evil-speaking—indifferent to the fame or feelings of others—irritable in his temper—worldly-minded—and prayerless. He may not have been an openly wicked man; perhaps quite the contrary; and he may have carefully maintained a respectable character in the world. But *after* the change, he detects previously

unnoticed sin, and dare not wilfully sin. If tempted, there is a new principle within him saying, shall I do this wicked thing and sin against God? His character with men is now a small matter, compared with his acceptance with God. He has become a man of daily prayer—secret prayer and social prayer—for mercy, through Christ. How submissive he is now to God's will and providence! How tenderly he now acts towards his neighbour; and how truthful, how gentle, and loving he is to all! and what peace he enjoys! As life wanes, death is not so terrible now as it formerly was. His earthly journey is now like the path of the just, shining more and more until the perfect day. He loves his Bible as his heavenly chart, and rejoices in the hope of at last beholding the glory of God! Such is the power of the gospel.

On such grounds we can account for the vast numbers of men and women who, in all ages, long after the days of miracles had ceased, submitted to persecution and death rather than deny the faith;—even although their lives were offered, sometimes on the scaffold, and in view of the most fearful tortures,—provided they would but recant. Nothing else enabled one of the earliest of many martyrs to say to his judge, 'you can kill, but you cannot *harm* me.' Nothing else gave courage to such martyrs as John Huss, who, on his way to the scaffold, in 1416, said—'I am here ready to suffer death.' It is said of Jerome of Prague, who, soon after the death of Huss, met a similar fate, that 'no pen could sufficiently write or note the things which he most eloquently asserted before the court which condemned him.' After all means had failed to persuade him to recant, he went singing to the scaffold, where, spoiled of his garments, and bound fast with chains of iron, the flames soon enveloped him.

But time would fail to give the briefest narrative of the

Reformers—both in our country and abroad—who bravely maintained the truth in the view of the lash and the thumb-screw, the stake and the gibbet. Of hosts of such men it may truly be said, as was said of believers long before their time, that they had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, of bonds and imprisonment. They were tempted, and were slain with the sword. They wandered about, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy.

But it has been alleged that many of these sufferers were learned men, which is undoubtedly true, well qualified in their own estimation, as scoffers say, to weigh evidence, and who, having once taken their ground, obstinately stood on it, through pride and the love of strife, as violent or foolish men will do ; and that if the internal evidences had any real power, they should operate alike on unlearned and learned men. The reply to this is not far to seek ; although, if they were educated men who did suffer, their example should be the more impressive. But there is no want of proof of the inherent power of the gospel on the hearts of the unlearned. Philip of Spain, who in the sixteenth century, was a great sovereign, made it the chief object of his life to establish the supremacy of the Roman Catholic Church, and to put to death all heretics, learned or unlearned, who were in his power. In the words of the historian Motley, he converted his 'kingdom into a hell,' as the surest way of sending heretics to heaven. 'He issued decrees for the extirpation of all sects and heretics.' At Ghent he issued edicts commanding their execution in the most universal and summary manner, without distinction of rank, sect, or education. He gave stringent and unequivocal instructions, that these decrees for burning, strangling, and burying alive, should be fulfilled to the letter : 'whereupon an *auto-de-fe* occurred at Valladolid,

at which crowds of men and women were thrown into the flames. Immediately afterwards, at Seville, another such exhibition took place, at which 'fifty living heretics were burned.' At another time, Margaret of Parma, Regent of the Netherlands under Charles the Fifth, was no sooner appointed than she 'displayed a greater horror for heretics than any other species of malefactors.' Under her regency, Motley tells us, 'the scaffold had its daily victims, but did not make a single convert.' He adds, that the martyrs were 'OBSCURE' people, yet they 'dared and suffered, as much as men *can* dare and suffer, for the noblest cause that can inspire humanity.' The axe and the stake were *realities*; and the heroism with which humble and unlearned men took each other by the hand and walked into the flames, and with which women sang songs of triumph, while the grave-diggers were shovelling the earth upon their living faces, were *realities also*. A famous edict declared that to read, touch, or expound the Scriptures, should be followed by these fearful penalties, with this singular provision, that if found guilty, the men *were* to be 'executed with the sword, and the *women* to be buried alive, if they do *not* persist in their errors; if they *do* persist in them, then they are to be executed with fire,'—this last being judged to be the most severe, in order to terrify them into a late and useless recantation. Thousands and thousands of uneducated Christians, nevertheless, persisted without recanting. We know, from undoubted records, that in eighteen years, in the Netherlands alone, 10,220 individuals were burned alive—declining to accept the comparatively painless sword, and that 97,321 were punished with confiscation of property, or imprisonment in loathsome dungeons, usually ending in death. The Inquisition judged not merely deeds but thoughts; proved by torture. The rack was the instrument of justice! The criminal

was left to defend himself as he best could, and had no advocate. We feel sickened, and decline to describe how the torture was applied by weights, fires, pullies, and screws. The torture could only be stopped by confession, and then, death was the only relief from heart-rending sufferings.

Now, seeing that multitudes of these who thus professed and suffered for the truth as it is in Jesus, could not be *all* learned men and women—qualified to test evidence—on the contrary, that the mass of them were ‘obscure’ and unlearned individuals, who were only able to read their Bibles, how was it that *they* were sustained under such dreadful sufferings? There can be but one answer. They experimentally felt the power of the gospel. An inquisitor asked a prisoner, named Muler, accused of reading the Bible, ‘Do you not love your wife and children?’ The reply was, ‘God knows I do, yet neither for wife nor children nor all the world, *can* I renounce my God and Saviour;’ whereupon he was strangled. About the same time the same inquisitor condemned together a father and son of the name of Ogier. The son was little more than a boy. As the flames were actually kindling about them, the son called out, ‘Father, all heaven is opening. Let us be glad we are dying for the truth.’

Every reader of the history of Scotland knows how much our covenanting forefathers and crowds of day labourers suffered. The history of England tells a similar tale. At Coventry, in 1519, seven very humble and unlearned martyrs, one of them a woman, were burned in chains together at the same stake. The woman was a poor widow; four of the men were shoemakers; another was a glover; and the last was a hosier; all of whom we would think were scarcely worth the vengeance of the Roman Catholic priesthood. They were committed

to the flames for the crime of reading the Bible and teaching the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments to their children ; showing how much the priests dreaded, and the common people felt, the power of the Word of God. It is foreign to our present purpose to narrate how, at length, under the providence of God, these atrocities came to an end.

We cannot be too thankful that we can now worship God without anyone daring to make us afraid ; but the power of the truth is not felt to be less, nor are its triumphs fewer. Every minister of the gospel, every Sabbath-school teacher, every Christian visitor of the sick, meets daily instances of the unlearned, young and old, meeting death calmly, because they have experimentally felt the power of the gospel. They find the young Christian assailed by some fatal disease when life is bright and promising, bidding farewell, without a tear, to parents and friends. They find parents peacefully leaving their children to Him who is the orphan's stay. They find the aged sinking into the grave, uttering no complaint, and sometimes saying, that to depart and be with Christ is far better. All of them believed, and were persuaded that the Redeemer will keep *that* which they have committed to His *care*.

'The book shall teach you—read, believe, and live—
Salvation which you need I freely give ;
'Tis done—the raging storm is heard no more—
Mercy receives him on her peaceful shore.
Yon cottager who weaves at her own door
Pillow and bobbins, all her little store,
Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night
Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light.
She, for her humble sphere by nature fit,
Needs little understanding, and no wit,

Just *knows* and knows no more—her Bible true—
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew.
And in that charter reads with sparkling eyes
Her title to a treasure in the skies—
The *light* she walked by, kindled from above.
Showed her the *certain way* to life above.'

Such is the internal evidence and inherent power of the gospel. God grant, for Christ's sake, that we may all feel it.

About all this, when death seems distant, too many are indifferent. Fools, also, may make 'a mock of sin;' but when their last and inexorable enemy shall be felt to be approaching them in stern reality, there will be neither mocking nor indifference.

FIFTEENTH ADDRESS.

REGARDING OBJECTIONS TO THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE.

There shall come in the last days scoffers.—2 Pet. iii. 3.

HAVING stated some of the grounds on which belief in the Divine inspiration of the Bible rests, it may be well to notice some OBJECTIONS, in addition to those which we have already adverted to, which are urged against it.

As at the day of judgment, two great parties only will be found—the one at the right and the other at the left hand of the Judge—so in this world the same great divisions exist. The one great party accepts with reverence the Bible as the Word of God ; the other, disliking it, meets it with every conceivable objection.

1. In ignorance or recklessness, it is sometimes urged that writing was unknown till after the days of Moses, or, at least, that early writings could not have come down to us. You may remember that in our Third Address the reverse of this was proved.

2. Another objection is, that there are errors in the Bible. In answer, we have already adverted to the frequency with which the Bible has been copied and re-copied ; and undoubtedly some clerical errors in transcription by fallible men occurred in some copies. It is only on such errors that this objection rests. Objectors tell us that there are errors in dates, numbers, names, letters, punctuation, etc. We have not ability to cope with these objectors. Their name is legion. On their

own showing, many of their objections are captious, and none of them are of the slightest importance, except in this view—that if the original text of the Bible be inspired, it should not—and here we admit they are right—contain one single substantial error. But many of their objections apply only to discrepancies between copies, which, investigation by learned men have removed. To this result all the objections of our time are fast travelling. It is not long since we were told that the errors amounted to thirty thousand. Such a statement, when first uttered, was enough to take away our very breath. It laid on learned men the responsible and laborious duty of making a searching and critical examination, and the result of their labours is given in the words of Bunsen, a man remarkable for learning and piety, and of high position, in the following terms :—‘Bold criticism has given us a sure text—not the reverse. It began with thirty thousand various readings, and it has reduced them to one hundred and thirty-seven ; of which, thirty-two are of equal value with our present text.’ Bunsen adds—‘Not one is important for any doctrinal purpose. This objection thus vanishes, leaving us much cause to be grateful that the labour expended by sceptics in trying to *detect* errors, have led to the confirmation of our faith. No amount of anxious truthfulness, on the part of the many writers of the Bible, could have preserved them, without the aid of inspiration, from discrepancies and errors on subjects so diversified as those contained in it. Absolute agreement among so many writers, if they were *not* inspired, would positively have been as great a miracle as any which the Bible narrates. It is easier to believe that their agreement resulted from inspiration, than to believe that it was produced without it.

3. Another very common expedient of infidels is to hit

upon some isolated statement in the Bible, which they allege cannot be true, and from thence to argue that the Bible cannot have been inspired. For *example*, they say that the Deluge could not possibly have been universal ; and that the Ark could not have contained all the animals which are said to have been saved by it. We might reply, that if either of these averments were true, some accidental error must have crept into our copies of the Bible. But neither of them is true. The assumption that the deluge really was universal, may be as unwarrantable as the childish error, that the Ark was a house built in some kind of a boat. The correct interpretation of the words of Moses, given in our translation, implying that the flood was universal, means only, that it was spread to the very great extent necessary to accomplish the purpose for which it was sent. Scholars tell us that the words in the original, which seem to express *universality*, are the very same words which, in Gen. xli. 56 denote that the famine in Egypt, against which Joseph made provision, was *widely spread* ; and which, in Deut. ii. 25, and in Acts ii. 5, referring to all nations, under heaven, mean only, in so far as there were nations by which the earth was inhabited. The Bible narrative of the flood is [Gen. vi. 7], that God said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth.' Again in ver. 12, 'And God looked upon the earth, and, behold it was corrupt ; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And [ver. 13] God said to Noah, the *end of all flesh is come* before me ; for the earth [obviously meaning its inhabited portion] is filled with violence *through them* [this could not be said of its uninhabited portion], [ver. 14] 'Make thee an ark,' *and so on*, for the saving of Noah, and his family. There was no occasion for the accomplishment of the declared purpose of God that the flood should be spread over

the vastly greater uninhabited portion of the earth. No, doubt, within the comparatively limited and inhabited region, the waters [vi. 18 and 19] 'prevailed *exceedingly*,' and all flesh died, as God had threatened; but it does not follow that the flood extended beyond the inhabited region. Then as to the assertion that the ark could not have contained all the lower animals that were alive at the time, the answer is obvious. It was only necessary that it should contain such of them as needed its shelter. We all know that many of the lower animals have what may be called their geographical regions, some very hot and some very cold, and that they cannot live in any other. It was therefore only necessary, and indeed, without a further and unnecessary miracle, it was only practicable to admit into the ark such animals, as were acclimatized in the regions then inhabited by man; and of this class the number was greatly smaller than those which did not require to be saved. Moreover, the dimensions of the ark, which it took about a hundred and twenty years to build, were enormous, and, according to our best calculations, were sufficient. It was an oblong flat-bottomed square, not made for sailing, like our modern ships, but only for floating. It had a breadth and shape the very best fitted for stowage, which sailing vessels cannot have, and it could carry 45,000 tons, while our largest vessels carry only about a tenth part of that burden; and further, its height admitted three stories, thus giving ample room for all necessary stowage. Noah, without a miracle, could not have launched such a huge vessel; but the Bible says, that as the waters 'increased' they bare up the ark,' Gen. viii. 17. Rightly reflecting on all this, there is really nothing in the infidel averments.

Since we are on the subject, it may be remarked that corroboration of the fact of the deluge is to be found in the

history or traditions of every nation in the world, that have any history or traditions. They all tell of the preservation of certain individuals who were the progenitors of the future race of men ; and some of these nations have coins and monuments, of unquestionable antiquity, representing the raven, the dove, and the olive branch. From all this, let us learn neither to be too readily startled by bold sceptical assertions, nor to stand too dogmatically on our own preconceived notions as to the interpretation of the Bible, on points distinct from the scheme of salvation which it reveals. In considering any other remarkable or isolated event recorded in the Bible, to which, after what we have said, we need not advert, we must never forget that He, the creator of the universe and the maker of all its natural laws, is Himself above all His laws—that He can alter these laws as He may see fit—that such narratives may either be given as they actually occurred, or as they appeared to have occurred,—and that there is ‘ nothing too hard for the Lord.’

4. There is another form in which scepticism appears at present with some little prominence. It is said, that though undoubtedly the truth of God is contained in the Bible, the Bible does not contain the whole truth of God. This is an assertion dishonouring to God, as it implies that the message of salvation is imperfect. We would rather encounter those infidels, who deny inspiration altogether, than those who say that God has spoken imperfectly. What God does, He does perfectly. The great object of the Bible is to reveal how sinners can be reconciled to God ; and this is done so completely, that on that subject nothing remains to be discovered, while progress, in the separate fields of science, is left unrestricted.

5. A yet bolder objection than the above is now sometimes heard. It is said, that Revelation must be set aside,

because man cannot be required to believe what he cannot positively see or feel ; or what he cannot infer from what he sees or feels. This is well-named positivism. It is just as irrational as it would have been in 1490 to ignore America, because no man before Columbus, either saw, felt, or inferred that it existed. In no department of the business of life do men reject any temporal advantages for such a reason. Every responsible man is bound to make reasonable inquiry. If told that the earth has undergone many changes, and he finds on the tops of the mountains skeletons of fish and marine shells in abundance, he believes it. He stands on no positivism there. In like manner, he *can* voluntarily examine the Bible, and in this preliminary intellectual effort lies his responsibility. The very fact that it offers to reveal what is of infinite importance, and tenders evidence of its truth, subjects man to the moral obligation of honest investigation, for the want of which, no thoughtlessness nor pride of intellect, nor dislike of the gospel, can apologise. Christ said, 'Ye *will* not come to Me that ye may have life.'

Every part of the Bible bears the impress of a wise and holy God. Truth, which abideth for ever, is its grand characteristic. 'Oh, how I love Thy law,' said David. 'Thy law is truth. Thy truth shall be my shield and buckler. Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.' The Bible has no equal. The portions of it written at the earliest period of the world are as accurate as those written at the latest. Time has strengthened, and not destroyed, its revelations. It is adapted to all the varying wants and desires of the inhabitants of all climes. It is fast spreading its influence over all the world, overcoming false religions everywhere. Wherever it is circulated, it is quick and powerful—converting the soul—making wise the simple—rejoicing the heart—enlightening the eyes—and making

men wise unto salvation. Before it Korans and Hindoo Shasters, and heathen philosophy, retire like night at the approach of dawn. The Bible is called for to the extent of many millions of copies annually, and the demand is still increasing. This phenomenon admits but of one explanation. The Bible alone can satisfy the longings of the soul. The mosques and temples which have been erected, with their officiating priests, like the temple at Athens, dedicated 'to the unknown God,' prove the existence of these longings, but have failed to satisfy them. The Bible alone supplies them all. It alone reveals the only Lord and Saviour, under whose reign 'the weary sons of want are blest.'

The most Bible-loving country in the world is at this moment the best. When the ambassadors of Japan asked our lamented Prince Albert to explain the source of Britain's greatness, he wisely presented them with a copy of the Bible.

In the words of an eminent author, the 'unaffected simplicity, openness, and honesty; the precision and circumstantiality of the narratives; the impartiality of its statements; the apparent inconsistencies and real harmony—the former precluding all suspicion of collusion, the latter showing the reality of what is related; the remarkable undesigned coincidences between various parts of the Book, especially the historical and the epistolary, presenting themselves in the form of incidental allusions to recorded facts, or expressions and statements that indirectly imply them;' to say nothing of the *inherent power* of the Bible to destroy the evil passions of the human heart, the many glorious triumphs it has won, and its marvellous progress, assure us that our blessed Saviour 'shall see of the travail of His soul and be abundantly satisfied.'

The power of the Bible was displayed in the story

of the profligate young soldier, who had a copy in his pocket, the gift of his almost broken-hearted mother, on opening it at the close of a battle, found a ball lodged in it. The Bible saved his life. The first words which the ball left legible were these—‘Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth,’ etc., ‘but know thou that for all these God will bring thee into judgment.’ This providential escape and warning transformed him into a reformed man.

Happily, the Bible, as a message from heaven, is addressed, not to any particular class of men, but to ‘whomsoever believeth;’ and is our sure charter to an eternal inheritance. Regard it, as the young sailor did, who never forgot his widowed mother’s last best gift, over which at their final parting they had wept and prayed. His ship was wrecked. A few feeble struggles over, and the sailor boy ceased to breathe. His body was cast ashore, and there was found firmly tied by his handkerchief to his wrist his mother’s last and most blessed gift—his Bible. Let us hope that a guardian angel bore his spirit to that glorious land where there are no storms. No doubt his mother shed tears of gratitude when this story was communicated to her.

We shall pursue this subject at our next meeting.

SIXTEENTH ADDRESS.

THE CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS—CONTINUED.

That they may see, and know, and consider.—Isa. xli. 20.

At our last meeting we noticed several objections occasionally stated against the inspiration of the Bible. We now propose to advert

To the alleged disagreement, which is erroneously said to exist between it and the instruction which we derive from the WORKS of God.

In doing so, it may be premised, that the utmost lessons which we can derive from His works are necessarily limited. Both the Bible and Creation certainly came from the same Divine author, and, therefore, so far as instruction is given by each, there cannot possibly be any disagreement between them. But creation came first; and its lessons, for all that we can tell, if man had remained *sinless*, might have been sufficient to enable him to understand, to adore, and to love God, 'for the invisible things of Him (says St Paul) are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead' (Rom. i. 20). But the case was altogether altered when man became *sinful*. At that moment his relationship with God was changed. He became the helpless rebel against an infinitely holy God. And the questions, *whether* and *how* the rebel could obtain mercy, could only be answered, if they were to be answered at all, by God himself. Unless He were pleased himself

to answer them, His works in nature never could have told any more than what they revealed to Adam in the days of his innocence amid the flowers of Eden, and that was nothing at all about redemption. But, *after* the fall—that is, after man had incurred the displeasure of God—He, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith He hath loved us, was pleased to answer these infinitely important questions, by revealing in His word both His willingness to receive back the repentant sinner into His favour, and the terms on which He could do so, consistently with His inflexible justice and infinite mercy.

In such circumstances, there can be no disagreement between the teaching of the word and the works of God, for this plain reason, that His works are *silent* about redemption which His word reveals. Any seeming disagreement between them, therefore, can only result from misreading and misunderstanding the one or the other. Let this distinction, then, be kept clearly in view. On the one hand, let us be careful not to try to extract from the works of God what they are neither fitted nor designed to teach; and on the other, let us carefully avoid using the Bible to support any preconceived theories of our own, for it is only *then* that we run the risk of coming into collision with the lessons of science. Bitter disputes frequently occur from the neglect of these two simple rules. For example, some men pretend that the Mosaic account of creation must be false, because the world's various upper *strata* required countless ages, long prior to the Bible story, for their formation. Others, again, aver that it was the work only of our natural six days. Both of these parties were wrong. It has recently been discovered, that the successive layers of *strata* did not require the imagined incalculable period of time for their formation; while the words 'six days,' may denote only six indefinite periods of time. Successive

layers of *strata* were formed by the eruptions of Vesuvius, which destroyed Herculaneum and Pompeii ; but they did not take countless millions of years for their formation. On the contrary, we know from authentic history, that the first eruption occurred only about seventy-nine years after the birth of Christ. In digging through the volcanic matter which overwhelmed these cities, no fewer than six of these layers were distinguishable, with the usual soil between them. They covered these cities, and must all have been produced within seventeen *hundred* years, instead of, as was previously supposed, probably as many *thousands*. Similar discoveries have been made near Mount Ætna. *Seven* distinct layers have there been deposited by eruptions at different dates, all within the records of history, with the usual earthen soils between them. In general, however, there is little agreement among scientific men, either as to the time required, or as to the precise causes of these formations in other districts, so that all reasoning founded on them is unsafe. Still, the longest conceivable period, in the absence of historic evidence to the contrary, is not necessarily unwarrantable ; because the Bible does not unfold the meaning of these grand and mysterious words, 'In the beginning,' as applied to Him, with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day is as a thousand years.

After the instances now given, we should not be readily startled at any similar objections, however boldly they may be uttered. On the contrary, when we hear it alleged that science, in any instance, conflicts with revelation, let us demand proof that science has been correctly understood ; and, if necessary, wait for light. It is not long since a discovery was made, whereby it was supposed that the chronology, and consequently the inspiration, of the Bible, were set aside for ever ; and for a time it could not be

readily answered. It was said that the Hindoos possessed records, *written* by their ancestors, of the movements of the heavenly bodies, beginning very long before the Mosaic account of man's creation. If it could have been shown that there were *men* who lived and *wrote any* kind of records—no matter on what subjects—*before* Adam was created, it would have been very startling; and at first the infidel eagerly took his stand on this surprising discovery, to which, for a time, no reply could be given. But light was waited for; and at length it came. Unfortunately for the Hindoos, it was eclipses, and such like celestial phenomena, which happened to be the subject of their boasted early records; but the discoveries of our astronomers, who *can* calculate these celestial movements *backwards* as well as forwards, conclusively demonstrated that the pretended Hindoo records were absolute forgeries, the contrivances of cunning but ignorant Brahmins, who had not been taught to make such calculations backwards, and who had written at hap-hazard,—whereupon this objection was quietly dropped.

Another wonderful discovery was once supposed to be made. We remember, many years ago, of seeing in the British Museum a slab, on which there undoubtedly was the impression of a human skeleton, said to have been formed, and to have been deposited far below the surface of the earth *before* the creation of Adam. We can recall the bewildering thoughts it occasioned. What, we thought, if on digging deep enough the remains of whole generations of such men should be found! Infidels chuckled. But it was soon afterwards demonstrated in so satisfactory a manner, as to meet the universal acquiescence of men of science, that by whatever convulsion the slab had been thrown where it was found, it was comparatively a recent formation; and this objection also vanished.

The pre-existence of a MIND of infinite power and wisdom (which just means, God), is the only conceivable CAUSE of the origin and operations of nature. In whatever way, however, that MIND was pleased to act—whether instantaneously, or progressively?—whether all at once, or at intervals?—these are questions which we are not concerned to answer, because they relate only to the periods and order in which God was pleased to work, and do not conflict with the great truth, founded both on Scripture and reason, that ‘THOU hast created all things, and *for* Thy pleasure [or, *according* to Thy pleasure], they are and were created.’—Rev. iv. 11.

Theories of evolution and development are, therefore, not worth spending much time about. They are more curious than useful. They leave untouched the great truth, that in whatever way He was *pleased* to work, the Creator of all things is God.

On the other hand, let us be careful to avoid maintaining against the lights of science, that which may be merely our own misreadings of the Bible. This error is committed by taking *literally* words, which are obviously meant to be figurative or poetical. No one can adopt as facts such Bible statements as that the earth stands immoveably on pillars, without giving an advantage to his opponent. To avoid this, we should endeavour to resist all preconceived views, and honestly try to study the Bible as *a whole*; and then, though we may find the reference to such and similar words as the ‘pillars of the earth,’ we will also find such other words as those of Job, that ‘God hangeth the earth upon nothing;’ and thus mistakes will be avoided.

One objection which is sometimes raised against the inspiration of the Bible, rests on the discoveries in Geology. We have already noticed that the *works* of God

cannot conflict with His *word*. Many other objections are the result of vain imaginations, such as the pretended spontaneous production of life.

We have already sufficiently noticed that the Bible, in referring incidentally to scientific matters, might have done so either as they *appeared* to exist at the time, or as they would *afterwards* be discovered. It did the former, otherwise it would have been unintelligible at the time, and would have anticipated the honours designed to be earned by human genius, in matters altogether distinct from the great object of the Bible.

But it is not the fact that any part of the Bible conflicts with natural truth. The discoveries of science have no doubt disclosed that our world has undergone vast changes, through incalculable periods, previous to the creation of Adam; and that there may have been creations both of animal and vegetable life, suitable to the previous conditions of the globe. But the Bible says nothing to the contrary of this. It does not begin its story so far back. If it could be proved that, at one period, the temperature of the world would have destroyed all the life that now exists on it, that would only show that God created life fitted to exist subsequent to the change. But science has not proved that life could be produced or developed by any power independent of God, or that the structure of living beings at first, was less perfect than those of the same kind born in our day.

As to the assertion, that life could be produced spontaneously, why do we see no recurrence of it? The opinion of NEWTON was, that life, previously existing, could not have survived the changes which the world has undergone; and that life which could not survive, certainly could not revive, without the creative power of God. And as to the theory of progressive development, the great

CUVIER well asks, Why, if any such theories had ever any real existence, the bowels of the earth have preserved no remains of them? Cuvier's assertion is—that the species, now living, are not varieties of species lost, but are new creations. And AGASSIZ says, 'I have the conviction, that species have been created successively at distinct intervals, and that the changes which they have undergone during a geological epoch are very secondary, relating only to their fecundity, and to migrations dependent on epochal influences.' The high testimony of Sir CHARLES BELL is given in his *Bridgewater Treatise*, to the following effect:—'Everything declares the species to have its origin in a distinct creation, not in a gradual variation from some original type; and any other hypothesis, than that of a new creation of animals suited to the successive changes on the inorganic matter of the globe—the condition of the water, atmosphere, and temperature—brings with it only an accumulation of difficulties.' Dr CHALMERS remarked, that if all the arrangements of the world were destroyed, all its known forces could not replace them, and that nothing less could do so than an all-creating God. God alone is the Creator of life.

In regard to an assertion, that little creatures, scarcely visible (we shall refer to some of them in our next address), can be produced spontaneously from matter; if it were true, it would only prove that God had to that extent conferred that quality on matter as He may of any other quality or property which He may please. But there is no proof of it. The existence of life implies a pre-existent Agent, of whom we can only say, 'Who can by searching find Him out?' Still, much contained in the volume of nature is written in legible characters. The unquestionable evidences of design, apparent in everything in us and around us—countless in number—inimitable in skill—

perfect in their adaptation to great and good ends—and the universal harmony which pervades all creation, demonstrate the existence of a SUPREME WILL exerting unerring intelligence and infinite power. That will is ONE. In the words of David (Psalm lxxxvi. 10), ‘Thou art great, and doest wondrous things : Thou ART GOD ALONE.’ But, without the volume of revelation, we should never have known how this great God, who is fearful in working, doing wonders, would deal with those of His creatures on whom He had conferred the power of loving and serving Him, but who had broken His law. The works of nature are silent on this momentous subject. True,

‘ In reason’s ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice ;
For ever singing as they shine,
The hand that *made* us is *Divine*.’

But then the Bible does far more than this. It proclaims heaven’s mercy to a fallen world, tells how grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and how sinners can be reconciled to God. May each of us experience what it is to be ‘born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the WORD OF GOD, which liveth and abideth for ever.’

SEVENTEENTH ADDRESS.

Many, O God, are Thy wonderful works.—Psalm xli. 5.
Sought out are they by all them that have pleasure therein.—
Psalm cxi. 2.

BEFORE considering what the Bible reveals, it may not be unprofitable to glance at some of the lessons which are taught by the WORKS of God.

The contemplation of their infinite skill in promoting the temporal happiness of men, as well as their display of the glory of God, afforded great ‘pleasure’ to the Psalmist, and no doubt strengthened his belief, as it should do ours, that the ever-loving and omnipotent Creator would not be unmindful of the best interests of His rational creatures. Such reflections should readily dispose us to accept the truths revealed in the Bible.

We all know that God’s works are infinite in number. The most cursory glance demonstrates that they could not have come into existence without a Creator, and that their purposes have been accomplished with inimitable skill. Let us think for a moment about some of His works, with which we are well acquainted, in which *design* is obvious.

I.—OUR EYES.

Every child knows their purpose and value, but not, perhaps, how skilfully they are formed. Behind the transparency, which we call the eye, something dark is designedly placed, which receives the images of external

objects. These objects are conveyed by a membrane to the brain, else we would be unconscious of sight. Well, that is provided. Further, if the external light be too strong, our eyes contract ; if too weak they dilate, so as to suit the degree of light to which they are exposed ; and they can adjust themselves so as to survey minute and near objects, as well as the extensive and distant landscape—the mite and the mountain—in the shade and the sunshine. They are lodged within a citadel of bone—protected by the brow like a rampart—screened by the eyelids—encircled by eyelashes, which defend them from dusty invasion—and they are supplied with a fluid to wash such intrusion away. The object of all this is apparent. Was there here no benevolent *design* ? Is there no *skill* in its execution ? And shall HE who formed the eye NOT SEE ? Again, look at

II.—OUR EARS.

A parchment-like membrane, popularly called the drum, receives external sounds ; and in a hollow behind it there are small bones, designed for conducting the sounds to the brain. All this is indispensable to enable us to hear. But several of what we would call difficulties, required to be overcome. If the hollow were absolutely void, the external air would press unduly on the drum, and destroy it ; while, if it were filled up, the conveyance of sound to the brain would be prevented. Moreover, the air within the hollow—like air anywhere—would expand by heat and contract by cold, whereby the ear would be rendered useless. But all this is designedly guarded against by the insertion of a slender tube between the hollow and the back of the mouth, which expands and contracts according to the pressure, and thus permits the air to be withdrawn and to return as required, every moment unconsciously. Benevolent *design*

and inimitable *skill* are both here, and shall HE who formed the ear NOT HEAR? Then look at such familiar objects as

III.—OUR HANDS.

How easy and how varied are their motions! Man can make a machine copied from them; but cannot confer on the machine such flexibility as our hands possess. Some thirty bones, obviously intentional and not accidental, act in concert. They are connected by ligatures, and exerted by muscles, in order to produce flexibility. But, though man might imitate such a structure, he could not confer on it the will which directs it to work. Moreover, a human machine would be destroyed by the friction occasioned by its movements, unless oil were constantly applied to the joints. In the human hand there is friction also, but its otherwise detrimental effect is provided against by an internal self-supplying fluid, like oil, which counteracts the tear and *wear* of their incessant motion. Ruled by reason, our hands are all but omnipotent. We have no such natural weapons as tusks or fangs, but the human hand wields the sword, points the gun, spreads the net, sets the snare, weaves, builds, plants, enables us to fly along the rail, and to converse with men at the antipodes by the wire. Surely He who formed so powerful a hand must have an arm that is FULL OF POWER.

This power of the hand requires to be ruled, as we have said, by

IV.—REASON,

and God has conferred reason on us. Between it and instinct there is an impassable gulf. The instinct of the ant and the bee, and the other lower creatures, enables them to do what they need to do, well; but they can only do as their predecessors did, and as all their successors will do,

and—no more. But God has conferred the higher gift of reason on man, whereby he is qualified to investigate, to collect facts, to draw inferences, to anticipate consequences, and has the power to govern his conduct, independently of impulse, instead of being governed by impulse. In all respects man is a being of wonderful organisation ; lofty in his intellect ; acute in his senses ; and peculiarly the child of his Father in heaven. He has been provided not only with all that his present necessities require, but with the power of cultivating those high attainments which can only be carried to perfection in the world to come. He is a being of progress ; and it is a solemn consideration that that progress is either in a good or a bad direction, which even death will not interrupt. On the contrary, that progress will be carried on *after* death, so that it is a momentous and present question, In what direction are we *now* moving ? and we cannot be sure, though too apt to forget, that we may not live for a single moment beyond the present.

Such is man—and such are some of his gifts, and prospects. Shakespeare well said—

‘ What a piece of work is man !
How noble in reason ;
How infinite in faculties ;
In form and moving, how express and admirable ;
In action how like an angel ;
In apprehension, how like a god !’

Still more, God has conferred on man an

V.—IMMORTAL SOUL.

Independently of revelation, the doctrine of the soul’s immortality is not inconceivable. Our bodies are composed of minute material atoms, which individually cannot think ;

and if these atoms cannot think individually, it is unlikely that their combination in our bodies could enable them to think. The thinking faculty, or the soul, must therefore have been conferred, or super-added, by God. Being so conferred, it may either die with the body, or continue to exist when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, according to the good pleasure of God. Reason tells us this much. It tells us more, that the existence of the soul is not necessarily dependent on the existence of the body, and that the Divine Being, who sees our longing after immortality, and is pleased with the happiness of His creatures, is not likely to disappoint them. Without immortality, life itself would be a poor gift, and it would be better to live as we list, if to-morrow we ceased to be. But, thanks to revelation, we know that our souls are immortal. The most learned heathen never, by natural arguments, got further than the belief that there was a *probability* of life hereafter. Many of them believed in utter annihilation—hence, they thought it brave, when life had lost its charms, or an escape was required from its evils, to resort to suicide. But the Christian has brighter and more glorious hopes. He leaves this world, assured that he will immediately enter on unimagined glories, and quits friends here, only for a brief season, to meet them again where there are no partings. Well has Addison, referring to the Christian, said—

‘The soul, secure in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
The stars shall fade away ; the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years ;
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of nature, and the crash of worlds.’

As we must live beyond such a wreck, it becomes us *now* to ponder over the Saviour's words, recorded in Luke xii. 5, 'I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear! Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. Fear him.'

Such being our responsible, as well as progressive condition, it becomes us to be exceedingly grateful to God that, in addition to His other mercies, He has conferred on us

VI.—THE GIFT OF CONSCIENCE,

which has been well termed God's representative. When not corrupted by passion or prejudice, it pronounces, with wonderful accuracy, approval when we do right, and condemnation when we do wrong. To some extent we all feel that it does so. It was a good rule, therefore, which a young man attended to, when he felt a wish to do something of doubtful propriety, to go to his knees and pray for Divine illumination. If, on rising from prayer, he felt that his scruples of conscience remained, he abstained from doing what he wished.

But this is a faculty which must be enlightened and cultivated by the Word of God, otherwise it may prove a false guide. The Bible speaks of a good conscience and an evil conscience—of consciences purified by the blood of Christ and purged from dead works—and also of consciences seared as with an hot iron—receiving no impression and giving no warning—defiled—blinded—perverted. Our daily prayer should therefore be that God would quicken us after His loving-kindness (Psa. cxix. 88), that so we may be enabled to keep His law. Otherwise, as a heroic woman exclaimed, when being unjustly led to execution, 'Conscience! how many crimes have been committed in thy name!' Something more than mere sincerity is needed. Divine enlightenment is required. The

man who prays to the Virgin Mary may be sincere, but his conscience is unenlightened ; hence the necessity of our carefully and habitually striving to keep conscience undefiled and under the influence of Bible truth, with prayer for the promised influences of God's Spirit.

In closing the present address, we cannot refrain from noticing, in the *first* place, that the care which God has bestowed in the supply of our present and temporal wants should dispose us to believe that He has provided whatever is necessary for us with reference to eternity. Every Bible reader knows that God has fully and freely done so.

Secondly. The immortality of the soul should seriously impress every thoughtful mind. Look at the appreciation of its value by God himself. Creation cost Him nothing but a word. He spake, and it was done ; but the redemption of the soul was purchased by the precious blood of Christ. Anxiety about the safety of our immortal souls should, therefore, be our first consideration. Hence the importance of Christian truth, and its reliable evidences.

We have already noticed some of the evidences of the truth of Christianity, and its power, over the human heart. It was to be expected that messengers from God would be partakers of His character and spirit ; and they really were so. When Jesus Christ, who is the express image of God, and our model, was reviled, He reviled not again. In dying, He prayed for His murderers. Each and all of His followers—all the writers of the New Testament—were so thoroughly imbued with His spirit that, though they were unjustly and cruelly treated, they reviled not. The same mind was in them which was also in Christ. They bore their sufferings, not only without repining, but they actually gloried that they were counted worthy to suffer.

Lastly. There is another circumstance worth being

looked at. It is the difference, or rather the *contrast*, between the means which were employed to propagate Christianity, and those of every other system. Mahomet founded his system on the slaughter of his opponents ; Jesus Christ exposed His disciples, and not His opponents, to death. Mahomet forbade His followers to read ; Christ and His disciples commanded it. He said, 'search the Scriptures.' In a word, so opposite was the plan of each, that an eminent writer remarks, 'If Mahomet took the way to succeed, then, according to human calculation, Jesus Christ (and it might have been added, His disciples) certainly took the way to fail.' Mahomet, to some extent, by his plan did succeed, and now fails ; and Jesus Christ and His disciples by theirs, as we at first sight might suppose, should have failed. But the gospel is spreading over all the world. All of Christ's disciples were forewarned that they would have to encounter persecution and death, and they met their fate in the quiet unrepining spirit of their Master, and that, not surely to establish an unprofitable falsehood, in the attempt to effect the regeneration of the world. Nothing so sublime could have been expected from illiterate and uninspired fishermen ; nor anything so holy from knaves. How like Christ were His inspired messengers of mercy to a fallen world ! With that message let us all be careful not to trifle, for how shall we escape if we neglect it ?

EIGHTEENTH ADDRESS.

Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.—

Jeremiah xxiii. 24.

HE fills the heavens and the earth and all worlds. He is GOD alone. Having formerly given some illustrations of the design, the skill, the power, and the benevolence of God, displayed in His works, we propose now to give some evidences of the universality of His presence, alike in His comparatively small and great works, whereby we may learn that He who will hereafter be our judge is now the present witness of all we do.

God is not forgetful either of the *smallest* or the *greatest* of His works. Some of these are amazingly *minute*, and others are incomprehensively great. We shall begin with the former, remembering Christ's words, 'Behold the fowls of the air, your heavenly Father feedeth them.' His lesson was that we should rely on God, as we are 'much better than they.'

I.—LITTLE CREATURES.

There are hosts of little creatures in our world, the workmanship of God, which, whether we consider their diversity, their perfection, their beauty, their complex organisation, or their habits, are absolutely bewildering. Moses, who had not the help of the subsequently invented microscope, said, that the earth and the seas were absolutely filled with the living creatures of God; and he was

correct. There are in some waters creatures so little as to be invisible to the naked eye. Some of these are so numerous that small fish kept in vessels filled with water, will live on them without any other food, provided the water be renewed daily. One writer pledges his veracity, that he saw some thousands in a single drop—darting and wheeling about without confusion. What *they* lived on was too minute for him to discover, but they evidently enjoyed life.

There is in the British Museum a catalogue, published about forty years ago, showing that more than twelve thousand different moths were then known, and the number since discovered is vastly greater. From their eggs there emerges the caterpillar, with its future organs concealed in folds. These folds are afterwards thrown off, then a chrysalis comes, concealed in a shroud, and at length, bursting the shroud, the bespangled and sportive butterfly appears.

Another little creature possesses the power of locomotion, by inhaling and ejecting the water of the lake. An examination of its organisation induced some engineers to try whether they could dispense with steam, and propel ships by a similar plan. Their difficulty was to provide the unconscious engine with the requisite *will*, and their efforts failed.

There is, in some lakes, a beetle, shaped like a boat, which glides through the water at its will, propelled by small paddles, moving like oars from its sides. Another propels itself by its tail, which it uses like the rudder of a ship. And another, called nautilus, has a membrane, which it expands like a sail when it wishes to go up before the wind.

II.—FLYING CREATURES

are equally wonderful. Human skill may copy their structure, but cannot produce their power of flying. Divine

design and skill have adjusted their tubular fibres containing air, so as to counteract the law of gravitation, and combine lightness with strength, that the creature may be enabled to fly. It is supposed that the bird can move its wings with a rapidity which eludes observation, rendering the tubular air warm and expansive, whereby it becomes buoyant, and that by compressing or relaxing the fibres, it ascends or descends or advances at pleasure. Whether this explanation be fact or fancy, it defies the skill and power of man to produce the *will*, so as to enable any artificial machine to fly.

But we must not dwell on these topics. It is enough to add, that in nature wherever provision exists for the support of life, there life is found—from the mountain-top to the lowly valley—in forests—in caverns—in the sea—life in all varieties is found, as if to teach us that God, whose resources are inexhaustible, is everywhere present, and will not forget *us*.

Infidels, however, have endeavoured to show that if life could not commence spontaneously, it might at least have advanced by development; and undoubtedly, if it had been God's will, this might have been His plan. But we find no trace of it. In the case of the moth there may be an *appearance* of development—but it is an appearance only—for the ultimate butterfly gives birth of *new* to the egg, which never gets beyond its ancestral butterfly, and begins anew with the egg. The young untaught spider weaves its web, at its first attempt, as perfectly as all spiders did before it, and as all who are to come after it will do, making no progress. But let us guard ourselves. The revelation of God's will in the matter of our redemption is declared in the Bible to be complete; but we do not mean to deny that our discoveries of His working in the natural world are but in their infancy. He has given

a very limited revelation about His works, and has left further investigation to the exercise of the talents which He has conferred on us. We need be under no apprehension, however, that there will ever be found any inconsistency between God's WORD and WORKS. If the Bible seems to contradict the supposed discoveries of science, we may depend on it, that the fault lies in our erroneous views of science ; while if the revelations of science seem to contradict any of the statements of the Bible, the fault may be in our imperfect apprehension of the import of these statements. We should, therefore, discuss such topics with a little humility, and the entire avoidance of dogmatism. When *we* cannot understand, we should wait, as the Pope should have done on the 2d of May 1493, when he gave, in the plenitude of his power as the successor of St Peter, a grant to the Spaniards of all the land they should discover to the west, and to the Portugese all to the east, not knowing that in each travelling straight on, instead of the space between them increasing, each would at length confront the other. The Pope's ignorance here was his misfortune ; and the assumption of infallibility was his fault.

Let us now briefly contemplate some of the

GREAT WORKS

of God, that we may derive some impression of the vastness of His dominion, and the universality and constancy of His presence.

The sizes, distances, and movements of a vast number of the celestial bodies have been ascertained with amazing accuracy without the aid of revelation. In consequence of this accuracy, eclipses are foretold with precision many long years before they occur ; and the British Government publishes, every three or four years, an astronomical almanac,

specifying the future track and position of distant orbs, to enable mariners, sailing on the ocean, to know exactly where they are.

THE SUN,

the centre of our system, sheds light and heat, and exerts attraction at the distance of no less than six thousand millions of miles from itself. Its circumference is two millions six hundred and seventy-one thousand miles. It would require a million and four hundred and five thousand worlds like ours to form the size of our sun. Its attraction holds all our planets revolving round its enormous mass in their spheres. But these planets would be drawn into the sun were its attraction not exactly counterbalanced by some counteracting power. Infinite power and wisdom, as well as mathematically accurate calculation, are here exemplified, as we shall notice immediately.

THE EARTH

is so large as to have a circumference of about five-and-twenty thousand miles; and yet, if it were annihilated, it would no more be missed from among the heavenly bodies, so far as regards its mere size, than a leaf falling from a forest-tree.

OTHER SUNS AND PLANETS.

The distance of our sun from our world is so great, that a cannon-ball, travelling with its ordinary velocity, would not reach it in a thousand years. Round our sun many planets revolve; some of them many times larger than the earth, and having several satellites or moons—all separated from us, and from each other, by amazing distances. Each apparently fixed star which we see in a

clear winter night is a sun—the centre of another vast circle, to which it gives light, and within which there is little doubt that worlds like ours revolve. These suns are inconceivable in number, and in distance from us, and from each other. We cannot realise a sense of such vastness. Their number already discovered exceeds eighty millions.

But without extending our range so far, let us simply consider our own single system, and we shall have sufficient cause, without doubting the universality of the presence of God, to exclaim—What is man! Our sun is about ninety-five millions of miles distant from our world. The planet Mars is distant rather more than 144 millions of miles, and Jupiter 493 millions of miles, from our sun. From their increased distances, they take more time to go round our sun than the earth. The earth does so in about 365 days. Mars, travelling at the rate of fifty-four thousand miles an hour, takes about two years; and Jupiter takes nearly twelve years. Saturn is still more remote. Its distance from the sun is about 904 millions of miles, or more than eight hundred millions of miles farther than our world; and it takes nearly thirty of our years to make one revolution round the sun. Neptune is inconceivably farther off. It is about thirty times the earth's distance from the sun, or about 2855 millions of miles.

In regard to light, though it travels at the rate of about a hundred and ninety thousand miles in a second of time, it takes about seventy years to reach our world from some of the distant suns of other systems. These suns, when looked at through our largest telescopes, appear like moons, and would look larger if a telescope could be constructed which would include all their rays.

All this inconceivably vast universe is supposed to be travelling onward and onward in one direction in a

straight line; and if this is correct, it may do so eternally. But if it make the slightest turn—so *slight* that man cannot detect it—it may form a vast circle in size, beyond the grasp of the human mind, within which the Almighty may reveal the more immediate presence of His glory. In the centre of that inconceivably vast circle He may have established that throne on which our Redeemer is seated, surrounded by countless hosts of men and angels, more glorious than all material worlds. This, however, is but an imagination; and being a very harmless and pleasing one, let it pass.

Sceptics assert that the vast variety and extent of God's works exclude the possibility of His being everywhere present at once; but further examination will, in the end, lead to the contrary conclusion that He must have been everywhere present at the same instant of time. This appears if we consider that—

1. All the planets follow the same laws of motion. They all revolve in the same direction, each preserving a separate orbit, besides rotating alike on their own axis. This proves them, in the first instance, to have been the work of *one* Creator, who possessed power necessary to put all of them in motion. The natural property of matter is not motion, but rest. The numerous orbs of our system, and of all systems, never could have moved of themselves. Stones or tables cannot begin to turn or move of themselves; and the greatest human force cannot propel a cannon-ball beyond four or five miles. But further,

2. The great Creator must have put all these vast bodies in motion *at the same instant of time*, and thus must have been *present with all of them* at the same moment, notwithstanding of their inconceivably vast distances from each other. We call the law by which God

keeps all of them in their spheres, attraction, of which we can say no more than that it is God's minister, created and appointed for that purpose by Himself. By it the suns and the planets have a tendency to draw all other bodies to them in a greater or less degree, according to their size and distance. In order, therefore, to keep each body in the sphere assigned to it, it was necessary to estimate the attractive power of each, and to balance it against the attractive powers of all the other bodies. Our moon, for example, if the earth's attraction were not exactly counterbalanced by that of the sun, and other influences, would be drawn either directly to the earth or to the sun. If the moon's orbit had been either nearer to the earth or to the sun than it is, the moon, in the first case, would have been drawn to the earth; or, in the second, to the sun. But the moon, on receiving its first onward impulse, was placed exactly where the greater attracting power of the sun, and the less attracting power of the earth, are so balanced by distance, that it is kept in its sphere. And this is the condition existing throughout all systems, proving that the DIVINE MIND must have been present, at the same instant of time, giving and controlling the original impulse. This truth met a remarkable confirmation some years ago, on the occasion of a previously undiscovered far distant planet (Uranus) being, by means of improved telescopes, brought into our view. When it was first seen, astronomers and geometers asserted that its attractive power required to be regulated or balanced by some *other* planet not then discovered. This led to one of the most astounding and brilliant discoveries that human intellect ever made, since man's creation. About thirty years ago, two astronomers, LEVERRIER and ADAMS, elaborating extraordinary calculations, in ignorance of each other, and without using the telescope, which could not

aid them when the object could not then be seen, came to the conclusion that Uranus would rush into the sun if it were not restrained by some counteracting attraction. And what did they do? The one at Berlin, and the other in this country, calculated that another planet *did* exist, and that it must appear at a particular moment. Their telescopes *then* swept the skies, and lo! at the expected place and moment, the planet, since called Neptune, quietly GLIDED INTO VIEW! Wonderful triumph of human intellect, and wonderful demonstration that God works by well adjusted laws (some of them traceable by His creatures), and not by chance. Where this is to end we cannot conjecture; but this at least it proves—that God was pleased to subject these bodies to one law, the application of which required a precise estimate of the attractive powers of all at the *same instant of time*, else they would have been involved in universal ruin. The smallest interval of *time* between these creations, or between the despatching of each on its course, or the slightest error in the *estimate* of the attractive power, or in the assigned *orbit* of each, would have been fatal. To assert, therefore, that God was not everywhere present at creation, involves greater difficulties than the opposite assertion.

In passing, we may remark, that Neptune is 2855 millions of miles distant from the sun; and the same generation that lived when it was first seen, will not see it again. All its motions are like those of the other planets, and a chemical analysis of its rays proves that it is composed of matter similar to that of our world.

But by whatever law God pleased to work, the existence of the law detracts nothing from His power, because the *law was His own creation*. Without a lawgiver there could have been no law. No law can create itself.

The advocates of modern free-thinking, desire to explain

creation as being the result of what they call *force*. They assert that the entire system of the universe is simply the developed result of some force, which, they allege, is inherent in matter. But this just revolves itself into a play on a single word. We ask, 1st, from whence came matter? 2d, Who created the force? and 3d, Who conferred on it the quality of *intelligent adjustment*—the faculty of mathematical calculation and accurately balanced arrangement—which, according to the sceptical theories, matter must have had? In their fancied *force*, we read their unwillingness to acknowledge the power and the presence of the only living and true *God*. Infinite force is just another name for the Infinite God.

But another objection appears. Some say, seeing that God's works are so vast, will He not, or may He not, disregard such humble individuals as we are? They met a reply of singular eloquence and power from Dr Chalmers. He said, 'It is, indeed, a mighty evidence of the strength of God's arm, that millions of worlds are at all times suspended on it; but it will surely make God's high attributes only the more illustrious, if He is at the same moment impressing movement and direction on the smallest wheels of the smallest machinery working incessantly around us.' The doctor reminded us, that about the time of the invention of the telescope, which gave birth to the infidel argument, founded on the vastness of God's works, the microscope was invented, revealing the minuteness of His other works; and that while the one instrument reveals a world in every star, the other reveals a world in every atom. 'The telescope,' says Chalmers, 'teaches the insignificance of the world we tread on, while the microscope redeems it from insignificance, and tells, that in every leaf, and flower, and stream there are worlds, numberless as the glories of the firma-

ment, teeming with life.' The creative power of God in distant worlds, and in minute specks, is not open to doubt.

Still, some allege that it does not follow that God will *condescend* to regard each individual of His countless creatures. But if reason tells us that God created all things, surely we are not to assume that, like an unnatural parent, He ceases to regard, and abandons His rational children. At any rate, having shown that in the plenitude of His power He *can* take charge of them, we are surely prepared to *believe* His word when He says, that as a matter of *fact* He does take care of them. 'Whither shall I go,' says the Psalmist (cxxxix. 7-10), 'from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I descend into hell, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and flee to the uttermost parts of the earth, there shall Thy right hand hold me.' Everywhere present? Yes; everywhere present—the hope and refuge of the penitent, and the terror of the ungodly. Never out of God's presence! Let those who desire to forget God think of this.

Possessing infinite power and universal presence, He is not regardless of His creatures. The Apostle Paul says, 'In Him we live and move' (Acts xvii. 28); and Paul said, 'For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things' (Rom. xi. 36). 'His kingdom ruleth over all,' said the Psalmist (ciii. 19); and our Lord says in Matthew, 'Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father' (x. 29). 'The very hairs of your head are all numbered' (Matt. x. 30, and Luke xii. 7). He rules over all—even over the will of man, yet leaving it free. None of us can look back on our past lives without being conscious of many instances of an overrul-

ing Providence. We cannot but regard what is called the accident by which Mr Haldane, who was spared for great usefulness, lost his appointment in the East India ship the 'Foulis,' which sailed, leaving him behind, and was *never more heard of*, as a special instance of God's watchful Providence. The remark of another man, who broke his leg by falling from the gangway of a vessel in which he meant to sail—that it *was for the best*—no doubt was felt by him to be really true, when he afterwards heard that the vessel foundered at sea, and that all on board perished. Stories of this kind are of daily occurrence. We propose to give instances of them in a concluding address. It is a Bible truth, that God feeds the ravens, and makes all things work together for good to His believing people. Tell me, said a scoffer to a Sunday school boy, where your God is? Tell me where He is not, was the reply. And rich beyond all this world's wealth was another confiding boy, who said, 'My God is so great that He fills all heaven, and so little that He dwells in my heart, and will protect and bless me.' God's eye sees all constantly—His hand guides all unerringly—His Spirit watches all vigilantly. He fainteth not, neither is weary; and there is no searching of His understanding. It is the glory of man that he is the creature—the child—of a prayer hearing and answering God and Redeemer. A sense of God's universal presence should operate in restraining us from sin, and prompt us to strive in all things to please Him. If we love Him, and seek Him, we shall find in Him our best and eternal friend. He will not overlook us. Overlook us! We may be very unworthy, but we are not *worthless*. God would not bestow His love on what is altogether worthless. He gave us souls fitted for eternity, and He spared not His own Son, but freely gave Him up to the death for us all. So far from

forgetting us, He will, with His Son, freely give us all things. Ever blessed be His name that He, who is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, has assured us that He also dwells with the man who is of a humble and contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite ones, Isa. lvii. 15.

One reflection more. Some of the astronomical calculations, to which we have referred, show with what precision man can trace some of the magnificent works of God. In this there is surely evidence of *some* affinity between God and the mind, which He has been pleased to confer on man. God is indeed the Father of our spirits. Let us strive to live as His redeemed children. How sad to think that any man, by his conduct here, may expose himself to be banished hereafter from the presence of God.

NINETEENTH ADDRESS.

THE RESULTS OF SCEPTICISM.

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.—

Rom. i. 2.

IN the last address it was remarked, that some sceptics (who have been forced to abandon various theories which they endeavoured to maintain) latterly admitted that there must have been *some* cause for the creation of the universe. That cause, as formerly mentioned, they call Force. They say that there is something inherent in matter, which progressively advanced, until it produced the world and all its living inhabitants.

We dissented from this theory, because it differed from the Bible narrative; although, undoubtedly, the word *cause* might mean creative intelligence. According to the sense in which it is used, it might either mean creation by an intelligent will, or simply, and no more than, creation by some unintelligent force existing in matter. But in this latter sense, it is incredible. The idea of unintelligence, originating all the varied and countless forms of life which fill the earth and the sea; or, that each of these almost infinite forms of life sprang from as many different acts of original unintelligent forces, is so extravagant, as to justify the words of St Paul, that some men, professing themselves to be wise, become fools. We admit that if God had pleased, it might have been His plan, and perhaps it is His plan, at different epochs,

instead of working instantaneously by a word, to impart to matter certain qualities which should progressively accomplish His designs ; but that would not affect the *fact*, that God created all things according to His good pleasure, and by agency of His own creation ; and if this had been all the difference between Christian faith and infidel fancy, it might only have been a difference of opinion regarding the import of the Bible account of creation, involving nothing vital ; and it might have left the revelation of mercy by God to guilty men, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, altogether untouched. But the difference is not so slight as that. On the contrary, it is a radical and *ruinous difference*. Sceptics of the modern school, though driven by common sense to admit that there must have been some original cause, do not admit that it was an intelligent one ; as they desire to exclude the idea of God from their thoughts altogether. We do them no injustice when we say this, for they avow it. It is this avowal which gives rise to the discussion between them and us. They boldly assert, that revelation must disappear, as human discoveries advance. On the other hand, the Christian believes that both his Bible, and the design displayed in the works of creation, equally prove that there pre-existed an infinitely intelligent MIND, by which all things were made, and without which nothing which exists was made.

So much for the *difference* between Christian faith and infidel fancy. The first rests on evidence, the latter merely on unwarrantable assumptions on the part of those who do not like to retain God in their thoughts. Sceptics, who are utterly unable to tell how matter itself was produced, assume, without proof, and ask us to believe, that matter brought into being, at creation's dawn, the countless flowers by which it is adorned, and also con-

ferred on them the force of growth, and of regular succession, each after its own kind. And so, likewise, as to man and beast, they appeared and grew like the flowers ! We know that sensation has passed into the material body of the brute, and that a higher degree of intelligence passed into the material body of the man ; but *how* this was accomplished without God, sceptics are as ignorant of as the beasts which perish. We need not, therefore, be surprised that they are silent on the question, whether human intelligence passed into an immortal soul ; for, according to their theories, there is no evidence of the soul's immortality. On the contrary, if human intelligence exists, as they would have us to believe, only by the inherent force of matter, it must cease to exist when that force ceases to exist, as happens when we die ; and hence the hope of immortality disappears. Some sceptics acknowledge this ; and they further acknowledge, that there are other difficulties involved in their creed, which they cannot as yet explain, and for which they tell us we must wait ; as they think that the ultimate progress of science may explain it all. The believer in the Bible knows the more 'excellent way.'

I. Let us look at what would certainly be the consequences, *first*, in this present world, if the sceptical fancies had any foundation in fact ; or rather, we should say, if it were generally *believed* that they had any such foundation.

The result of the sceptical theory, that the universe was produced by the inherent force of unintelligent matter, is very startling ; and not so safe or so desirable for man as at first sight it might seem to be. In such a case, of course, *no sin could be committed against God* ; and if there be no God, there could not, under any circumstances, be

any responsibility, in the world to come, for our conduct in the present world. And would this be any relief to man even here? Think, for a moment, what the present world would become, if such a doctrine were generally believed. All the civilization which has followed the propagation of the gospel would be undone, and the world would drift back into absolute heathenism, or unbridled licentiousness, just as has happened in times long bygone to nations that have perished. In any event, man might live as he listed. No doubt, for the sake of society, earthly rulers might issue moral laws, and punish those who broke them; and punishment would overtake those who violated any natural laws—for example, the morning's headache would follow the evening's debauch; but that would be all. Certainly no man could be conscious of committing any sin against a Being whose existence was not believed. But most certainly this would not improve the condition of the world. The philosopher, the preacher, and the legislator, might descant eloquently on the beauties of morality; but it would be eloquence wasted on men who thought to attain the object of desire by the commission of any crime whatever, provided only that they could commit it without being detected by their fellowmen. In such circumstances, to administer an oath to a witness in a court to tell the truth, or an oath of fidelity to a man entering on an office of trust, as each of them shall answer to God, would be a useless ceremony; and all the threatenings of human laws, and the exhortations of the priesthood, would be mere devices to frighten ignorant people. And what greater folly could be committed by a nation, than to force secular education on children, if children are not, at the same time, instructed and warned, that to use education as a means of enabling them to commit forgery, or any other crime, would be a

sin against God? The Christian avoids what is wrong, because he knows that God sees him, even if he were sure that man could not detect him; while the sceptic, who scatters his 'free thought' over society, would destroy all confidence between man and man, and imperils our best interests even in this world.

II. But look at what would be another unavoidable result of such scepticism, and, indeed, of all infidelity, if generally prevalent. We have already remarked, that if human intelligence is the product only of some inherent force in matter, the instant that that force is withdrawn or extinguished, as it is when we die, there must be an end of man. We must be creatures having no immortal souls. Eternity will never end; but what of that, if there be no eternity for us? When the troubles of this life are over, or

‘When life’s dark maze we tread,
And griefs around us spread,’

is there no rest remaining for the people of God? Are we to pass away like the flowers of the field? Are we to die, as the brute dies? If so, why should we struggle to lead a virtuous life? Why may we not live in the indulgence of sensual appetites, like the beasts that perish? and why may we not strive to acquire wealth by *any* means, in order that we may increase even our short-lived earthly enjoyments? or why, if bowed down to the earth by anything that renders life miserable, may we not commit suicide? If there be no immortal soul within us—no eternity for us—let us eat and drink, rob and steal, for to-morrow we die. If all our hopes of immortality, founded on revelation and the death of our blessed Lord and Saviour, be delusions, then, as Paul says, we *are* of all

men 'the most miserable;' but, thanks be to God, he added, 'Now is Christ risen and become the first-fruits of them that slept,' 1 Cor. xv. 19, 20. We thus stand on an elevation from which we decline to be dragged down by the infidel, and rejoice that life and immortality have been brought to light by the gospel. It is that revelation which tells us, and with which our reason is satisfied, that the word of God was *the force* and the power which created all things. In the stability and orderly succession of His works, we recognise His greatness. In His having made all things very good at first, we see His wisdom; and, while the sceptic looks at them with wondering and unsatisfied amazement, we know and rejoice that our Father in heaven made them all. We rejoice in the INDIVIDUALITY and UNIVERSALITY of that infinite MIND which is God alone—our Creator and Preserver—the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May all of us, when life's little day comes to its close, be able to say, that He is our God; we have waited for Him. Till then, let us delight to contemplate His glorious and countless works, because in reason's ear they proclaim that

'The hand that made them is divine.'

In such contemplations the Psalmist David assures us he took great delight, and he was thereby saved from being troubled like our modern speculators, and kept from forgetting God,

'Who by His wisdom made heavens high :
For mercy hath He ever.
Who stretched the earth above the sea :
For His grace faileth never.

That God, who made the great lights shine :
For mercy hath He ever.
The sun to rule till day decline :
For His grace faileth never.'

On the other hand, it is a solemn thought that, at the day of final accounting, many precious souls will be rejected, because, with God's word and works full in their view, they knew not God.

TWENTIETH ADDRESS.

OF THE GODHEAD.

I am the first and I am the last ; and beside me there is no God.—Isaiah xlv. 6.

God is a spirit.—JOHN iv. 24.

HAVING formerly given some of the proofs that the Bible was written by the inspiration of God, we proceed to inquire, *what it reveals* concerning Himself.

It announces a truth, almost universally accepted, that there is—

I.—ONLY ONE GOD,

uncreated, and from everlasting. There must have been a great First Cause. We cannot imagine absolutely *nothing* creating, or turning nothing into *something*; and just as certainly as we ourselves exist, and are surrounded by all kinds of existence, do we believe that some Being previously existed, who must have been distinct from, and the author of all. From the works of this great Being, we discover His wisdom, power, and goodness; but the instruction derived from His works is limited; and it required a revelation from Himself to tell whether He had enacted any, and what laws for the government of His creatures, and how He will deal with those who break His laws. Such a revelation is given in the Bible; and what He saw fit to reveal, it is our duty and our interest to study, and to obey. .

The Bible reveals, and reason believes, that before the mountains were brought forth, even from everlasting, God was, and ever shall be. The *design* which His works of creation display, is one of the oldest, the most direct, and conclusive proofs of His existence and power and goodness. The Bible, however, reveals infinitely *more* than this.

But, before soliciting your attention to its revelations, we may remark—1st, That we must not look to the Bible to satisfy idle curiosity, or for anything which is manifestly foreign to its great object. Beyond what is revealed about the INFINITE ONE in the Bible and by His works, we must not intrude. If told that God existed from all eternity, and if any scoffer should ask *how* that could be ; or, whether there was not a still *earlier* first cause ; and so on backwards without end, they intrude into the incomprehensible. Such inquiries are unprofitable and audacious. Reason cannot grapple with the infinite. Let us be content with knowing, in the words of Paul, that ‘to us there is but one God,’ 1 Cor. viii. 6, to whom we can yield our undivided affections and obedience ; and that we are not like the heathen, ‘with their gods many and their lords many,’—uncertain on whom to call in their day of trouble. And 2d, Do not be surprised if you hear, as we do in these days, half-fledged philosophers parading some newly discovered *supposed* discrepancy between the works and the word of God. Rest assured, that as both came from God, they are equally infallible, and that we would find them to be so, if we could fully and accurately understand them. Infidelity is the offspring of *error* or of *half*-discovered truth. He who attempts to explain what can only be known in part, is sure to err. Many instances can be given (we have already given some) of apparent discrepancies vanishing, and of our faith being strengthened,

on the acquisition of fuller knowledge. Without saying more, we proceed to notice—

II. That the Bible tells us that ‘GOD IS A SPIRIT’ and the ‘FATHER of spirits,’ Heb. xii. 9 ; and that He must be worshipped in ‘spirit and in truth,’ John iv. 24. The existence of an every-where present God is a mystery, but we dwell among mysteries. In a former address, the universal presence of God was proved even by His works to be a *fact*. That fact, and also that God is a spirit, is revealed by His own word.

Hosts of spirits exist. ‘What shall we do, my master?’ said Elisha’s servant, when the city was beset by enemies. Elisha prayed, and the Lord opened the eyes of the servant, and he saw the surrounding mountains full of spirits, such as are still sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation, Heb. i. 14. But the Father of all spirits is universally present—in all places of His vast dominions—at all times—at once. ‘Thou compassest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. There is not a word on my tongue, but Thou, Lord, knowest it. Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?’ This is incomprehensible, but not contrary to reason. It is more difficult to imagine God for a moment absent, than to believe Him to be universally and at all times present. If we contemplate the countless number of His great works—their complicated motions and irresistible acting and counter-acting forces—at once co-operating and repelling, notwithstanding their amazing magnitudes and distances—all flying and revolving without collision through infinite space, we must feel the absolute necessity that God, who was present at their creation, must still continue to be at all times everywhere present. It is no

sufficient answer to say, that He impressed laws on His works, by which they are governed. Neither His works nor His laws have any consciousness in themselves, and cannot govern themselves. Laws, not enforced at the will and instance of some living and acting mind, would remain for ever a dead letter. It is alone by the exercise of the will of God that what are called the laws of nature (which are at all times and everywhere His servants) continue to act. What we call laws are just the workings of His will. Remove that will, or suspend it for a moment, and these unconscious agents would cease to act, and not only our world, but the entire universe, would be involved in one vast ruin. Just take such an insignificant illustration as half-a-dozen of steam-engines, rushing along the rails under the management of engine-drivers and others supplying fuel, regulating the speed, and directing the shuntings and stoppages, and then that suddenly these engine-drivers were to abandon them. What else could happen, in spite of their most perfect construction, than an inevitable crash? Depend on it, God, who has bestowed infinite power and skill on His glorious creations, will not leave them to be the sport of chance, to end in confusion. There is light enough in nature to convince all but those who will not see, and a clear enough revelation to convince all but those who will not believe, that there is one universally-present, over-ruling, and ever-blessed God. This is a most delightful and sustaining truth. It is only because God is everywhere present, that He can be the guide, the refuge, and the redeemer of those who place their confidence in Him,—or that His people can assuredly say, that though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, they will fear no evil, for *He is with them*, Psalm xxiii. 4. It is not without indignation, that we ask the infidel, why he will not permit us to trust God's

word? If he thinks he can safely live without God in the world, *we* are at least as safe as *he* can possibly be; and why should he disturb us? He may think himself the child of chance, and the victim of blind fate, and that we only dream—but why should he disturb even a dream so pleasing, so purifying, so exalting? But if *we* be *not* dreaming, what is the condition of those who reject the offers of mercy through Christ? The Christian rejoices in the faith of coming glory; and surely those, to whom this unhappily is unintelligible, should leave the believer in the enjoyment of that peace which passes all understanding. The Christian acts a kinder part towards the infidel, for ‘I would to God (he humbly says) that thou wert not almost, but altogether such as I am’ (thank God we need not now add), *except these bonds*. We cannot help dwelling on the glorious truth that God is everywhere present. It assures the believer, that no real evil shall come nigh his dwelling—that God will keep him under the shadow of His wings, Psalm xvii. 8. Let us also remember, that ‘Thou, God, seest us!’ Let us keep this habitually in recollection. It will conduce to our eternal salvation. It will restrain us from sin, and arm us against temptation, it will sustain us under trial, and dispose us to strive to please God.

III. Further, the Bible reveals that in the Godhead there are—

THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST.

Here again is another inscrutable mystery. But it is not contradictory to reason: it is only unexplained and above it. On a little examination, however, it will be found to be not so difficult of belief as at first sight it may seem. *It is clearly revealed*. If any one shall presumptuously

endeavour to pry into this mystery, he will end where he began, and be compelled to confess that God is unsearchable. To many who 'do not understand what they say, nor whereof they affirm,' this Trinity is a stumbling-block, and to them we remark that—

The Bible reveals what only from convenience we call a triune, or a one-three God. Scoffers allege that the Bible declares that there are three persons in one God, which cannot be true, because one cannot be three, nor three one. But, in the first place, we deny that the Bible says so. It does not, even by inference, say that there are three distinct and several persons in the same sense of the term, in the one Godhead. It does not even employ the word *person* at all, except in only one inapplicable instance (Heb. i. 3), where the Son is called the express image of God's person; but this only denotes what Christ meant when He said, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father' (John xiv. 9). This single instance points to the unexplained identity of the Father and Son, *before* the incarnation of Christ, and nothing more; which identity was as perfect as the *image* on a seal and its impression. And, in the second place, those who say that the Bible represents that one can, *in the same sense*, be three, or three one, only misrepresent the Bible, for the purpose of discrediting it; and they behave just as foolishly, though without even the plea of ignorance, as the king of a sunny region did, who scouted the assertion that water could be turned into solid ice, because it was contrary to reason, instead of being only unintelligible to *his* reason. He should have accepted it on the testimony of credible witnesses, even though they could not explain it. We accept the Bible statements in matters which we cannot understand, though they be unexplained, simply because it is proved that the Bible is the word of God.

Let us then see what on the subject of the Godhead the Bible really says.

The Bible does not say that the Godhead consists numerically of either one or three persons in the same sense. It declares an unexplained oneness, certainly; and we also admit that it declares there is some distinction in that oneness; but beyond this the Bible is silent: and, therefore, those who demand an explanation about what they call the constitution or essence of the divine nature, are guilty of intruding where angels dare not tread. We yield our belief to the Bible, which, in some unrevealed and unexplained sense, compatible with oneness, says, there are in the Godhead—the Father who planned, the Son who executed, and the Holy Ghost who is, even now, applying the work of redemption to the believing penitent,—in fulfilment of a gracious covenant, entered into, as the word *covenant* implies, by more than one. To this gracious God—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God—we desire to lift our hearts in adoring gratitude, as our ever-living, ever-loving, and everywhere present God and Redeemer.

The length of these remarks prevents us at this meeting from entering on what the Bible reveals in proof of our 3rd head. We propose to do so at our next meeting, and close the present by observing, that one great lesson which we should learn from what has now been said is, that in all discussions regarding the contents of the Bible we should, as a rule, adhere strictly to the words employed in the Bible itself. By departing from this rule, an advantage in argument is given to sceptics. Even so early as the days of the Apostle Paul, he complained, weepingly, of heresy. There have since been many attempts to lower the dignity of Christ. One of these attempts consisted in the assertion that the ‘Father, Son, and Holy Ghost’

meant nothing more than threefold *attributes* of God, and this, we believe, induced early Christians, from the best intentions, to adopt the word *persons*; and hence there has been much unprofitable wrangling. This shows the propriety of adhering strictly to the language of Scripture itself. Whatever has come from God should be received by us exactly as He has given it, with the docility of little children.

TWENTY-FIRST ADDRESS.

Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts.—Isaiah vi. 3.

The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy.—Psalm cxlv. 8.

God is love.—1 John iv. 7.

IN the Bible the attributes and prerogatives of the God-head are ascribed alike to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

In the first chapter of Genesis, ver. 26, we read that 'God said, let us make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness;' and in the 27th verse, 'And so God created man in HIS own image. The remarkable intermingling in this short revelation of the singular and plural number, seems intentionally to denote one God in whom there is some unexplained distinction. There is no reason to suppose that it was only a style, like that employed by earthly kings; because it was not assumed by any of them, till long after the time when the Book of Genesis was written. Passing from this, we remark that Christ said—

1. 'O righteous FATHER, Glorify thou ME with Thine ownself, with the glory which I had with Thee *before* the world was,' John xvii. 5.

2. 'And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son,' John xiv. 13.

3. 'The Comforter, which is the HOLY GHOST, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things,' John xiv. 26.

In these verses the curtain is so far raised ; and there is revealed

1. God the Father ;
2. The Son, Jesus Christ ; and
3. The Holy Ghost.

And this is done that we might obtain ETERNAL LIFE—
John xvii. 3.

Adopting this arrangement, let us examine what the Bible tells us—

I.—OF GOD THE FATHER.

We read in Deut. vi. 4, ‘The Lord our God is one Lord.’ In Mark xii. 32, ‘There is one God, and there is none other than HE.’ In Isaiah, ‘Is there any God beside ME? Yea, there is no God; xlv. 8. And in 1 Cor. viii. 4, ‘there is none other God but one.’ See also Isaiah xliii. 10-13, and xlv. 5; John xvii. 3.

This one God is the CREATOR of the world. In the beginning, He said, Let there be light, and there was light : and Paul says, ‘For by God were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones and dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him; and He is before all things; and by Him all things consist,’ Col. i. 16.

It is difficult to believe that there can be any conscientious doubt of the existence of an all-creating God. Think as we may, it is easier to believe this than to believe there is no God. We have formerly alluded to the evidence of design and method in creation—the adaptation of means to their obvious ends—the regulated motions, harmony, and order that exist—the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, preserved in their spheres without collision—the succession of day and night, of summer and winter, of

seed-time and harvest—the structure of the human frame—the formation of our eyes and ears and hands—the beatings of our heart—the marvellous powers of the human mind—all these, and everything around us, proclaim the existence of a great and Almighty God.

We have read somewhere that some not *very* wise men were endeavouring to convince a company, in which there was a young boy, that there had not been a Creator, and not even a ruler in creation. The boy listened for a while with a puzzled countenance, and then asked, in great simplicity, whether a neighbouring flour-mill with which he was acquainted had been set up by itself, and whether it set itself agoing, and ground and emptied the grain and resupplied itself? And the only answer he got was, that he was too inquisitive !

We readily believe that the Maker of all things is God. His works indicate His power, wisdom, and goodness ; and His word greatly extends our knowledge of His character, and reveals His moral laws and His plan of redemption. But of His essence both are silent. We cannot explain the nature of that mind which has existed for ever, and knows everything, and at once sees everything. He is the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, before whom we can never bow too lowly. We know from the Bible—

1. That the understanding of the incomprehensible One is infinite, Psalm cxlvi. 5. All past—all present—all future events are known to Him, and we are responsible to Him for all we do : His foreknowledge, however, in no way interferes with the freedom of our own will ; it only controls or turns it to His own purposes, leaving us responsible to Him for all we do.

2. ‘He is the only wise God’ (1 Tim. i. 17). He sees what is absolutely right now, and for all time, and

invariably does what is right. This being the case, the desire of *change*, which with us is the result of failure, has no place in the Divine mind. This should give us unbounded confidence in God, who makes 'all things work together for good to them that love Him,' Rom. viii. 28.

3. He is perfectly just and righteous. 'He will judge the world in righteousness,' Acts xvii. 31; for 'justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne,' Psalm lxxxix.

14. His judgments depend not on extraneous testimony. His infinite knowledge renders Him independent of all testimony, and hence, without mistake, He 'will render to every man according to his deeds,' Rom. ii. 6.

4. Yet 'the Lord God is merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and will by no means clear the guilty,' Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. This is perplexing, and could not, consistently with His justice, be explained by unaided reason; but it is transparent in the pages of revelation, which tell us that God laid our help on One who has satisfied divine justice, and is mighty to save to the very uttermost all who come unto Him. This is certain, that one design of God in making, for His own glory, sentient creatures, was to confer happiness on them. If He had meant to create a miserable world, nothing in the hands of Omnipotence could have been easier. God has made our senses sources of pleasure; equally easily could He have left them to become sources of wretchedness, as they are when we abuse them.

5. God is omniscient. 'All things are naked and opened to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do,' Heb. iv. 13. 'His eyes are in every place,' Prov. xv. 3. From His infinite knowledge and wisdom, justice, omnipotence, and omniscience, it follows that—

6. God is unchangeable. He is the Father of lights, with whom 'there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning,' James i. 17. Knowing the end from the beginning, He does always what is best. When He threatens, He threatens what is right—and what He says He will do, that He does. We may therefore tremble at His word. By our sins we have indeed incurred His displeasure; but, blessed be His name, His goodness has not abandoned us. Even though our own hearts condemn us (and God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things), yet in our blessed Redeemer—

‘ His wisdom, love, and mercy meet,
In all their dignity complete.’

7. God is infinitely Holy. This does not denote any *one* of His attributes taken singly. It is rather the combination of the whole, in which there is perfect harmony—no conflict, no weakness, no imperfection. The attributes of inflexible justice and infinite mercy towards guilty criminals, at first sight appear unintelligible; but in God, through our Saviour, each is unsullied, and He is now and for ever 'the Holy One of Israel,' Psalm lxxi. 22, whose works are holy, whose dwelling-place is holy, whose ministering angels are holy, and whose redeemed people shall be made holy.

Holiness has different acceptations. Sometimes it signifies all moral excellence. In combination the different perfections of the Divine nature might be likened to the colours of light, when the solar rays paint the rainbow. Each is capable of being distinctly contemplated. But all blended together, constitute Divine excellence; which evokes the song from the great multitude, whom no man can number, who surround the throne on high, 'Holy, holy, holy! blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and honour,

and power, be unto our God for ever and ever !' We, as yet, but see through a glass darkly.

8. God is omnipotent. He is the uncreated 'I AM,' who rules and disposes all things according to His own good pleasure. He is 'King of kings, and Lord of lords.' He never slumbers—is never weary—bends to no circumstances—and enjoys rest, happiness, and glory in Himself—blessed for evermore. He is God Himself alone.

9. God is love. All His doings flow from love, 1 John iv. 7. 'Behold,' says the apostle John, 'what manner of love the FATHER hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God !' Let us learn to view His character aright, that we may love Him in return with all our heart and might. Do not regard Him, as too many do, *either* as a Being of inflexible justice *or* of infinite mercy ; but, as He is revealed, of inflexible justice *and* infinite mercy. According to the first view, some men foolishly desire to escape from Him ; and according to the last, others, equally foolish, regard Him as so merciful that He will not punish the frailties of weak creatures. But God is true ; and no rational man should risk his eternal safety on any other views of God than those which He has himself revealed. There is but one foundation—tried and precious—on which the guilty sinner can, consistently with all the attributes of God, rest in the assurance of mercy. Some men think that God's justice excludes His mercy, and hesitate to view Him as an object of love, just because they are conscious He might justly be their enemy. Their dread is not without reason. But the humble Bible-reading penitent may dismiss all such fears. We are indeed unworthy, but we are not worthless ; and God says, herein is His love manifested, that He invites us to return through Christ. If we do not, it is not because there is any obstacle on the part of

God. The Bible says, 'Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts : and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him ; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon,' Isa. lv. 6, 7. God will never recall His invitations, nor alter the words which have gone out of His mouth. Surely then God is love ! Our iniquities did indeed present an enormous barrier between God and us ; but the infinitely greater love of God has removed the barrier. His unchangeable character for truth stood in our way, and no angel could have told how God could be a just God, and yet our Saviour ; but His infinite wisdom did this, and His love now shines forth more radiantly than it otherwise could have done ; for He paid a price for our redemption—the only instance in which we are told that God paid a price—and it was the blood of His well-beloved Son. And if 'He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?' Rom. viii. 32.

Let each of us, then, appropriate the love of God to himself. God is our hiding-place and our refuge. To mistrust Him is to dishonour Him. Behold, He says, I stand at the door of your hearts and knock : if any man will open, I will enter in and dwell with him. In such a union how great the blessedness !

' The work which wisdom undertakes,
Eternal mercy ne'er forsakes.'

May He pour down upon us the influences of His Holy Spirit, and enable us all to be looking constantly at what we may venture to call His loving and bright side, and then we shall even now grow like Him, and finally enjoy Him for ever. May all of us be able to say—

‘I’ll praise my Maker while I’ve breath
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers ;
My days of praise shall ne’er be past,
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures.’

A martyr thanked God that he had spent the night preceding his execution, not in prayer, but in *praise*.

The operation and progress of the love of God on the human heart may, in some instances, be compared to the dawn of day, whereby the landscape mantled in gloom is gradually revealed in glory. In other instances it may come to the sinner like a burst of sunshine. But in which ever way it comes, it invariably purifies the heart. The love of God must always fill our hearts, but it will not empty them of love to others. Peter says, seeing ye have purified yourselves in obeying the truth, love one another fervently ; and James says, if ye fulfil the royal law, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The love of God fills the heart, as the light of the sun fills the world, displacing the darkness, and brightening whatever is good.

Without enquiring why sin was permitted to enter into the world, we rejoice that out of its gloom, the glory of God has emerged with increased brightness.

TWENTY-SECOND ADDRESS.

OF JESUS CHRIST.

Jesus, the holy Child, shall sit
 High on His father David's throne ;
 Shall crush His foes beneath His feet ;
 And reign to ages yet unknown.

*In the beginning was the Word ; and the Word was with
 God, and the Word was God.—John i. 1.
 Christ is the light—Luke ii. 32 ; the life—John i. 4 ; and
 the Redeemer of the world.—Rom. iii. 24.*

WE come now to consider what is revealed in the Bible regarding our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Perhaps we meet a difficulty, from our minds being familiarised with the Assembly's Catechism—'How many *persons* are there in the Godhead?' a term adopted by early Christians in order to repel some of the heresies referred to in a recent address. We do not, however, find the words—person or substance—in the Bible, as applied to the Godhead. We are told that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost 'are one' God ; and it is better to adhere simply to the precise words of the Bible, because God is unsearchable.

In the Bible we are told regarding the Son Jesus Christ, that He came forth from God, and took on Him our nature. Thus we read in Isaiah ix. 6, 7—'For unto us a CHILD is born, unto us a Son is given : and the government shall be upon His shoulder' (an allusion to the sceptre, or

sword—ensigns of government—borne upon or hung from the shoulder); ‘and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the MIGHTY GOD, the EVERLASTING FATHER, the Prince of Peace.’ Make of this verse what men please, it describes a child and mighty God;—a Son and Everlasting Father, ‘of the increase of whose government there shall be no end.’

We find in the 14th verse of the seventh chapter Isaiah these words—‘Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name IMMANUEL.’ The angel who appeared to Joseph said, Matt. i. 20-23, ‘thou shalt call His name JESUS; for He shall save His people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name IMMANUEL; which, being interpreted, is, God with us.’ This is equally free from ambiguity.

In Daniel, Christ is foretold as the ‘MESSIAH’ and the ‘PRINCE OF PEACE;’ and in Malachi, He is called ‘THE LORD,’ who would suddenly come to His Temple.

The Gospel of John i. 1, opens with the remarkably explicit statement, which we selected as the first motto to this address. ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the *Word* was God.’ We know that the ‘Word’ means *Christ*, because in the 14th verse we read, that the ‘WORD was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory.’ ‘The same’ (ver. 2, 3) ‘was in the BEGINNING with God. All things were MADE by Him; and without Him was *not anything made* that was made.’ Again, we read in Heb. i. 10, referring to Christ, ‘Thou LORD in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Thine hands.’

In John x. 30-33, Jesus said, 'I and My Father ARE ONE.' Then the Jews took up stones to stone Him, 'because Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God.' On that occasion, Jesus did not say that the Jews had misapprehended His meaning. On the contrary, He says ver. 38, 'Believe the works' that I do, 'that ye may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.'

In Romans ix. 5, Paul says, 'As concerning the FLESH CHRIST came, who IS OVER ALL, GOD blessed for ever. Amen.'

In Col. i. 16, 17, creative power is again ascribed to Christ in language which could not be applied to any creature; 'For by HIM were ALL things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; ALL THINGS were CREATED BY HIM, and FOR HIM; and He is before all things, and by Him ALL THINGS CONSIST.' And in Col. ii. 9, we read, that 'in HIM (Christ) DWELLETH ALL THE FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD BODILY.'

In Hebrews i. 1-8, creative power, in similar terms, is again ascribed to Christ, closing with these words—'Let all the angels of God WORSHIP HIM. Of the angels He saith, 'Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire. But unto the SON He saith, Thy throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom.'

In Phil. ii. 5-11, we have these direct statements—'Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be EQUAL WITH GOD; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, etc.; wherefore God hath given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and in earth, and under the

earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'

In 1 John v. 20, we read—'And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true'—'even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is THE TRUE GOD, AND ETERNAL LIFE.' One of the names of Christ, in the New Testament, is the ETERNAL LIFE. For example, 'We shew unto you that ETERNAL LIFE, which was WITH the Father, and was MANIFESTED unto us' (1 John i. 2); and 'THE LIFE was the light of men.' Christ claimed the title when He said, 'I am the resurrection and THE LIFE.' 'This is the true God and Eternal Life.' Again, Christ said, 'Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the FATHER in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake, John xiv. 11. And whatsoever ye shall ask in MY NAME, that will I do, ver. 13. If ye shall ask anything in My name, I WILL DO IT,' ver. 14. And again, I and My FATHER are ONE; and yet again, 'And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine ownself, with the GLORY which I had with THEE BEFORE THE WORLD WAS.' In the Epistle to the Romans we read, 'of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, GOD BLESSED FOR EVER. Amen.' Rom. ix. 5.

'Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in THE FLESH, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, RECEIVED UP INTO GLORY,' 1 Tim. iii. 16.

In writing to the Church at Corinth, Paul gives equal honour to the Father and the Son, in these words—'Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ OUR

LORD, both theirs and ours: grace be unto you, and peace, from GOD our FATHER and the LORD JESUS CHRIST,' 1 Cor. i. 2, 3.

We read in Rev. i. 8, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the LORD, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the ALMIGHTY,' ver. 18. 'I am He that LIVETH and was DEAD; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of HELL and of DEATH.'

Christ is revealed as possessing the attributes and prerogatives of God in words like these—'I give every man according as his work shall be,' Rev. xxii. 12. 'I am the FIRST and the LAST,' ver. 13. 'I am He that SEARCHETH the reins and hearts: and will give unto every one of you according to your works,' Rev. ii. 23. 'Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them,' Matt. xviii. 20. 'Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway unto the end of the world,' Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. 'My grace is sufficient for you,' said Christ, in answer to Paul's prayer, 2 Cor. xii. 7-9.

It is a great act of omnipotence to raise the dead. There would seem to be but one display of omnipotence beyond it, and that is, for one who is dead to raise himself. Yet Christ did both. He raised Lazarus and the widow's son, and said, speaking of the temple of His body, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again,' John ii. 19-21. He said also, 'I HAVE POWER to lay down My life, and I have power to take it up again;' and He did so. 'He was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and is called the WORD of God,'

Rev. xix. 13, 'the KING of KINGS and LORD of LORDS,' ver. 19. Christ having two natures renders this intelligible. And lastly, Christ, as supreme, shall judge the world, 'when the SON OF MAN shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him; then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations,' etc., Matt. xxv. 31, to the end. And who is this Son of man? It is answered in Revelation xx. 11 and 12—'I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened, etc., and the dead were judged,' and so on.

Scholars tell us that the name Jehovah in the Bible is peculiar to God alone. It occurs thus in the last verse of the 83d Psalm—'Thou whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the Most High over all the earth;' and they assure us that in such verses as the following—viz., Isaiah xl. 3; John i. 23; and Matt. xxii. 41, to the end, wherever the word Lord, referring to Christ, occurs, it should have been translated JEHOVAH, thus:—'The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way—not of the Lord, as it appears in our translation—but prepare ye the way of Jehovah.

In these numerous passages, and more to the same import can be quoted, we find Christ alluded to as possessing eternal existence and creative power—'by Him were all things created;' omnipresence—'Lo, I am with you always;' omnipotence—'Ask what ye will, I will do it;' and omniscience—'He knoweth what is in the heart of man.' We find Him claiming and receiving the worship alike of angels and men; exercising the government of the world, and finally judging all nations. In a word, possessing all the attributes, and exercising all the pre-

rogatives, of divinity. How suitable, then, were the dying words of the first martyr, Stephen, 'LORD JESUS, receive my Spirit !'

These passages impute no shadowy honour to Christ. They are too numerous, and in their import too clear and convincing, to admit of any dispute among those who, in a humble spirit, are content to know what saith the Scriptures. We accept Christ in His divine nature as one with God, blessed for evermore. In our next address we shall show that He took on Him a human, and thus had a two-fold nature. By quoting passages referring only to His human nature, the true dignity of Christ seems to be lowered ; but beware of quoting what applies to Him as man, in order to detract from what applies to Him as God. When men do this, they do indeed, as Paul says, wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction. Christ ever liveth and reigneth to give repentance to His people, and the remission of all their sins. None can forgive sins but God.

O ! that each of us were inspired with the faith of the once doubting Thomas—'Reach hither thy finger,' said the risen Lord to him ; 'be not faithless, but believing.' 'Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God.' Jesus did not reply, Say not so ; but He replied—'Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed ! blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed,' John xx. 27-29. The conduct of Christ on this occasion, is in unison with what He said on another. He declared His self-existence, by calling Himself, 'I AM THAT I AM.' He said to the Jews, 'Before Abraham was, I AM,' John xiii. 58. In Isaiah xlv. 6, God calls Himself the first and the last ; and Christ calls Himself the FIRST and the LAST in Rev. i. 8, 11, 17, 18 ; ii. 8 ; and xxii. 13. In Jeremiah xvii. 10, God claims it as His peculiar prerogative, that He searches all hearts, and trieth the reins.

And Christ says, Rev. ii. 23, 'I AM HE which searchest the reins and hearts.'

'My song shall bless the Lord of all;
My praise shall climb to His abode :
The Saviour by that name I call
The great Supreme Almighty God.
Without beginning or decline,
Object of faith and not of sense ;
Eternal ages saw Him shine,
He shines eternal ages hence.'

1. We cannot conclude without noticing the painful assertion of Unitarians, that Christ was a *mere* man, or at least, an inferior divinity. In support of their assertion they quote Christ's own words, 'The Son can do nothing of Himself,' and 'My Father is greater than I.' But it is dealing dishonestly with the Bible to select some verses, and suppress others, in order to evade the true import of the whole. A falsehood is committed, no less by a partial statement, calculated to produce a false impression, than by the direct assertion of an absolute untruth. The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, should always be spoken. The knights in the fable of the shield, with its one side of gold and its other of iron, would not have differed if each had examined *both* sides and spoken the whole truth.' The Bible tells us that Christ had *two* natures—that He is one with, and came forth from, God, and also, that He assumed our nature. 'In the BEGINNING was the Word, and the *Word* was with God, and the Word WAS GOD'—and 'the *Word* was MADE FLESH and dwelt among us' John i. 2, 3, and 14. We are not going to repeat the numerous verses already quoted ; but, taking a combined view of the whole of them, the wondrous truth is established that Christ, as both God and man, is as

able as He is willing to save to the very uttermost all who come unto Him. Further,

2. Christ by His incarnation became the light and the life of the world, Luke ii. 32 ; John i. 4. The set time for His birth was not till after the world had fully tried to achieve its highest glory, and failed. Christ then broke through the darkness by which the world had been overshadowed for four thousand long and dreary years. It looks as if the world had been left so long to itself, to show what it would become without the gospel. It ended, no doubt, in the production of powerful empires, but alas ! they produced the most degraded condition of society the world ever saw. Under the Roman Empire many wise laws were unquestionably enacted, great public works and monuments of wealth and skill were erected, the arts were encouraged and flourished, and its vast armies, commanded by renowned generals, with its apparently inexhaustible resources, seemed to bid defiance to all rivalry. Its eloquent orators and wonderfully enlightened philosophers betokened high intellectual attainments, and it reared distinguished historians and poets, well qualified to record heroic deeds in a literature more enduring than brass or marble. But within, all was loathsome rottenness. At the same period of time, both the Imperial greatness and the lowest vices that ever disgraced humanity, culminated. Luxury and unrestrained licentiousness prevailed. Decency forbids further allusion to them than Paul made, in Rom. i. 21-23, where he represents the world as wallowing in the mire of uncleanness through the lusts of the flesh, and the prevalence of all that was vile. The history of Rome, at its most triumphant period, presents an endless repetition of rulers assassinated, rivals murdered, the oppressed seeking refuge in self-destruction—and of pampered and profligate courtizans, and pretended moralists, enjoying to

gether the deaths of gladiators as a pleasant recreation. Verily the world by wisdom knew not God.

It was *then*, when society seemed irretrievably debased, and Augustus Cæsar had decreed 'that all the world should be taxed, Luke ii. 1-7, that the infant Saviour was born. Though heralded in the heavens by a host of angels praising God, He appeared on earth in weakness. Nevertheless He was the true moral and intellectual light and life,—the renovator and redeemer of the world. The Roman empire contained the germs of decay, and has passed away; but the Saviour's kingdom, founded on purity and peace, shall endure for ever, and enlighten and ameliorate the whole world. And by what means? Not by the sword, which, though suffering from it in the hands of His enemies, the Saviour forbade to be used by His friends; but by the power of His Holy Spirit. By way of further improvement, we remark—

3. That Christ is our *model*, as well as our light and life. We are thus taught, as humanity requires, both by precept and example. In the Bible we have the rule, and in Christ the model. He desires to redeem us from death, and to purify us unto Himself as a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Titus ii. 14; and He has left us an example that we should follow His steps, 1 Peter ii. 21. What a holy example!—that of Him who did no sin, and in whose mouth was no guile, ver. 22. His life was one continued endurance of temptation, trial, toil, injustice, ignominy, and oppression, such as no one of us, under any circumstances, can ever be called on to endure—yet He never complained, nor ceased to be doing good! Such is our model!

Lastly. If we love Him who first loved us, and gave Himself for us, we will be delighted to run in the way of His commandments, as the natural expression of our love

and gratitude. We shall only at present advert to one of His requirements. He who was the light of the world has expressly commanded His followers to be the light of the world also. This may be startling ; but it is true. In Matthew v. 14, we read Christ's brief and comprehensive declaration, ' Ye are the light of the world '—as if He had said, I am about to leave it, and I require you to be to the world what I have been to you ! Let us then receive into our hearts Christ's heavenly light, in order that we may be enabled to reflect it in the spheres in which we move. It is Christ's pleasure to work through human agency, and this lays on each of us a large responsibility. It may be that our spheres are limited ; but Providence has allotted them to us, and it is only within them that He requires us to shine. We cannot all be ministers or missionaries, or even Sabbath school teachers ; but we live in families, or we have companions—we work in the workshop or the counting-house—wherever we go, there let our light shine—not ostentatiously nor offensively, but quietly and gently, not forgetting the solemn truth, that each of us is *either* reflecting Christ's light ; or by a bad example, casting a dark shadow, and hardening the hearts of those who might have been improved by a better example.

TWENTY-THIRD ADDRESS.

CHRIST'S ATONEMENT.

Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.—2 Cor. viii. 9.

WE proceed to notice :—

1. That Christ *was* rich.
2. That He *became* poor ; and
3. That His purpose in becoming poor was that thereby *we*, who are naturally very poor, might *become* rich.

(1.) Christ was rich. We know enough about the riches of this world, for which men toil ; we know enough about houses, and lands, and earthly treasures ; but we can have no comprehension of the riches of Christ in God from all eternity ; dwelling in light—unapproachable and full of glory. He was the WORD which made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that in them is. He was rich in all the perfections, and powers, and attributes of the God-head—rich, as one with God—blessed for evermore—the bountiful Giver of every good and perfect gift unto all that call upon Him.

As repetition may be pardoned on a subject so important as this, we notice—

That Christ in God was from all eternity,

1. As the Creator, Col. i. 13-17 ; John i. 1, etc. ; Heb. i. 8-10.
2. Almighty, Phil. iii. 21, etc.

3. Omnipresent, Matt. xviii. 20, etc.
4. Omniscient, John ii. 24, 25.
5. Immutable, Heb. xiii. 8.
6. An object of worship, Heb. i. 6.
7. And the final Judge, Matt. xxv. 31, 32.

He proved His divinity by His miracles—His greatest miracle, if correctly we can speak of degrees of infinite power in miracles, being His own resurrection.

II. But He became poor. A houseless wanderer may not have become poor; but Christ *became* poor. He took on Him our nature, Heb. x. 5, because only in such could He suffer. That was a great descent! And then how very poor He became!—born in a stable, and laid in a manger—an infant of days. It would have been condescension to have become an angel. But He became a man of sorrows, and, though the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air nests, He had not a place where to lay His head. Poor!—very poor—despised, rejected, and scoffed at by wicked men—deserted by friends—laden with sins not His own—carrying our griefs—despitefully used—drinking a bitter cup; crying, if it be possible let it pass from Me, yet not My will, but Thine be done—dying a degraded and painful death, between two malefactors. ‘My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?’ He indeed became very poor. It is well to contemplate His sufferings. They show the hatefulness of sin; His love to the sinner; and what we owe to Him who first loved us.

1. Christ submitted to the severest sinless sufferings that humanity could possibly endure; and He did so deliberately and in the full *knowledge* that they would end in a cruel and ignominious death. He hungered, He thirsted, and was weary. He was misrepresented by those who hated Him; and His ‘familiar friend’ lifted up his

heel against Him, and betrayed Him. He was deserted by all. He was falsely accused, scourged, compelled to carry His cross. He fainted, and was cruelly nailed to the cross, amidst the derision of those who said, He saved others, Himself He cannot save; and finally He died in agony and shame.

2. But all this gives us only a superficial view of His sufferings. Let us try, in some small measure, to realise His mental agony. Suppose that we did some great and generous action, which was scornfully despised and ridiculed, how would we feel? Christ, full of pure and disinterested love, sacrificed Himself. So long as He was on earth, He never left off doing good. The blind saw, the dumb spoke, the deaf heard, the crippled and the palsied walked, and the very dead awoke at His bidding; and having *proved* by miracles that He could forgive sins, He did so; and what did He get in return? By some for a short time He was received gladly, for the sake of the loaves and fishes. But we know the end. Falsely accused, as if He did wonders by the power of Satan, there was thus added to His overwhelming bodily sufferings the imputation of the basest motives, the bitterness of scorned and rejected love.

3. Still more than this. When He entered on His public ministry He knew, not only all the ravages that sin had previously made in the world, but all that it would make as the stream of time rolls on till the world's end. He foresaw all the wars that would desolate the earth. He heard all the groans of the down-trodden slave. He knew the millions of men who would perish through pestilence, famine, and vice. As man, He had a sympathetic feeling for all the broken hearts, and all the children of sorrow that would ever live and die. Worse than all, He knew all the victims of ignorance and crime, who would eternally

perish ; and when we remember that He *wept* at the grave of Lazarus, and exclaimed over Jerusalem, ‘How often would I have gathered thy children as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye *would not*,’ can we doubt that the sensitive spirit of Him, of whom it is *not* written that He ever *smiled*, endured, in addition to His own wrongs, a constant and depressing amount of sorrow for others, which we cannot estimate.

4. But there is yet a deeper and more unfathomable abyss. Christ was SMITTEN, not merely of men, but of God, Isa. liii. 4, for sins not His own. Who can pretend to understand, or dare try to explain, what Christ endured when sin, which He abhorred, was imputed to Him by His Father whom He loved ; and when, in consequence of that imputation He was both smitten and *deserted* by God as He hung on the cross ? He who was so meek, so gentle, and so loving, that He took little children to His arms, and blessed them, was emphatically the man of sorrows, and endured what we cannot comprehend. The Bible tells us that the world was created, and that we live and move by Him ; yet He suffered at the hands of sinful men. Creation cost Him nothing but a word—not so redemption. There is an incomprehensible difference—an infinite contrast—between the majestic word which at creation said, ‘Let there be light,’ and the bitter cry on the cross that He was forsaken.

III. We come now to notice, that Christ’s *purpose* in thus voluntarily undertaking such sufferings, and becoming so very poor, was that we, who are very poor and helpless, might become RICH—joint-heirs with Christ, of God.

In the Bible our condition is described in the following words, Rom. iii. 10-20—‘There is none righteous, no, not one ; there is none that understandeth, there is none

that seeking after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become unprofitable ; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified.' Again, Gal. iii. 10, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the law to do them.' And again Rom. v. 12, 'Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that **ALL HAVE SINNED.**' And death follows sin, and to the finally impenitent eternal punishment follows death, Matt. xxv. 41. This is surely being poor, and helpless, and miserable indeed.

But the death of Christ, as our substitute, has rendered it consistent with God's justice to make poor helpless sinners the subjects of His mercy.

"Salvation is a glorious sound,
To malefactors doomed to die."

In Christ, God's justice is satisfied, His law is vindicated, His mercy is triumphant ; and we are redeemed, and made rich now in God's favour and protection, and heirs of a glorious inheritance hereafter. Can we give anything in return for all this ?

'Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small ;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my heart, my life, my all.'

A number of questions are often started, such as, why God permitted sin to enter the world ? and to be transmitted from father to child ? We decline to discuss these questions, simply because their discussion can have no practical tendency. No man has any right to complain, seeing that God himself has provided for all, who believe

in His message, a full relief from the penal consequences of sin—‘for as by one man sin entered into the world,’ ‘so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification.’ Sin has indeed reigned unto death, but even so does grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord, to all who do not reject the gospel, Rom. v. If, therefore, any man shall finally perish, it will be through his own personal guilt and fault, because full reparation against the evils of the fall has been provided. The heathen, who never heard of the gospel, will be judged righteously by the law written on their hearts; and infants, without exception, will fill the heavenly mansions. The obdurate sinner only will be rejected. It is no great stretch of faith, to believe that if God had revealed His reasons for permitting the entrance of sin into the world, they would, consistently with His character, have been found to be holy, wise, and good. It is sufficient for every moral object, to know that evil and sin *do exist*. The *fact* of the existence of sin and evil is a matter of experience to us all. God has a right to the willing obedience and love of His intelligent creatures; which, to be honouring to Him, must not be compulsory. This reminds us, that since God at all times sees, hears, and knows what all of us think, and say, and do; since He knows all our evil thoughts, lusts, envyings, and malice, as well as outward deeds, His forbearance is wonderful. It is a forbearance unparalleled, unsought, and unmerited. Look at the requirements of God’s law. At the bar of conscience none can say that he has kept them perfectly. Have we loved God, from whom we receive every blessing, with all our heart, and strength, and might? Without speaking of open violations of God’s law, such as none of us may have been ever left to commit, think of the unseen sins of the heart. Take a single instance.

Perhaps some one has done to us a grievous wrong. Have we never felt, in such a case, a desire to make him feel in return what he has caused us to feel? Do we on that account hate him? Do we speak ill of him? Would we refrain from doing him good? If misfortune come over him, does it give us pleasure, as he richly deserves it? Have we not sometimes retaliated? But what says Christ? Bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you; return no man evil for evil, but contrariwise. Christ left us an example to this effect, under circumstances infinitely more trying than any that can ever happen to us. Christ dying, prayed for His murderers. If Christ's example is our rule, all of us must plead guilty.

But by way of alleviating our guilt, some of us may say it is mean-spirited to submit to be insulted, that bystanders would despise us, and insult, not resented, might be repeated. We shall only say, in answer to this, that it often requires much more real courage to act according to Christ's example, and to brave the world's scorn, than to indulge in resentment and retaliation. As being an act of homage to Christ, we should strive to repress whatever is hateful to Him, and to imitate and obey Him. A brave officer, who on duty had often faced danger at the cannon's mouth, was once, on failing to resent an insult, reviled as having given way to cowardice. His answer was a memorable one—'I am not afraid to fight, but I am afraid to sin.' There is no bravery—there is lamentable infatuation in forgetting God's holy law.

We repeat, that Christ became poor, in order that we through His poverty might become rich.

Christ became our *SUBSTITUTE*, by taking on Himself, and becoming answerable for all our sins, and atoning for them by His death.

Is this, or is it not, what the Word of God reveals?

'In Thy sight shall no man living be justified,' Psalm cxliii. 2. 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so, death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,' Rom. v. 12. This is sad enough.

It is explicitly stated in the word of God, that without the 'shedding of blood there is no remission,' Heb. ix. 22. Accordingly, throughout the whole Old Testament Scriptures, the blood of atonement is given as typical of Christ's atonement. The sprinkling of the blood on the door-posts, which saved the first-born, was typical. The slaying of the victims in all the Jewish sacrifices typically set forth 'Christ our Passover sacrificed for us,' 1 Cor. v. 7.

The Bible tells us, that Christ took our place, 'bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows.' 'He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord laid on *Him the iniquity of us all*,' Isa. liiii. 4, 5, 6. 'He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of *My people was He stricken*,' Isa. liiii. 8. 'He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many,' ver. 12. 'For when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, CHRIST DIED FOR US,' Rom. v. 6, 7, 8. How vast was Christ's love! 'He suffered for us.' He bore 'our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness,' 1 Peter ii. 21, 22, 24. 'Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thine own blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation,' Rev. v. 9, 10. Thus through Christ's poverty we may be made rich—rich in having sin atoned

for, and forgiven—in being restored to the favour of God—rich in being made heirs of an inheritance in heaven. Christ's death satisfied the demands of God's justice. It was foretold in the garden of Eden. It was afterwards prefigured by the high-priest, who offered one goat 'for a sin-offering,' and let 'another go for a scapegoat into the wilderness'—a representation of a Saviour suffering for sins borne away.

When Christ appointed the ordinance of THE SUPPER in memory of His dying love, He said, this is my blood, or the symbol of my blood, 'shed for many for the remission of sins,' Matt. xxvi. 28.

PAUL says, Rom. v. 6, 8, 'Christ died for the ungodly.' And 'God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' And (ver. 12) 'as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' 'So (ver. 19) by the obedience of one *shall many be made righteous.*'

Expressive and clear are the closing words of the ninth chapter of Hebrews, where, after alluding to the daily repetition of the typical ceremonies of the old dispensation, it is there said, 'Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands—the figures of the true;—but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high-priest entered into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must He have OFTEN SUFFERED since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to BEAR THE SINS OF MANY; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time,

without sin, UNTO SALVATION.' 'Christ OUR PASSOVER IS SACRIFICED FOR US,' 1 Cor. v. 7. 'Now, then, says Paul, 2 Cor. v. 20 and 21, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us—we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God; for God hath made Him (Christ) sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.' Here our sins were imputed to Him, and He imputes to us His righteousness, whereby we stand accepted in the sight of God, and made rich through all eternity.

The testimony of the Apostle PETER is equally explicit, 1 Peter ii. 24, 'Who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree,' etc., 'by whose stripes we are healed.' Again, 1 Peter iii. 18, 'For Christ also ONCE SUFFERED FOR SINS, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.'

The Apostle JOHN in his first epistle, chapter i. 7, says, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin; and chapter ii. 2, and 'He is the PROPITIATION for our sins, and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world.'

And Paul says, we are justified freely by the grace of God, 'through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood: to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins;' 'that He might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus,' Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26.

CHRIST Himself said to His disciples, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends,' John xv. 13, 14. 'And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life, John iii. 14, 15.

It may be thought that these quotations are more

numerous than necessary, seeing that one clear and explicit statement in God's Word ought to carry with it an authority which cannot be increased by repetition; and this is quite true. Yet, considering the vast importance of the subject, the dulness of our spiritual understanding, and the danger of a few passages being misunderstood, it is well to show that the doctrine of the atonement holds the chief place in the gospel.

Christ did not die merely as a martyr dies, and as the apostles died; and He is now rewarded as no creature ever was. When Christ was raised from the dead, He was set 'far *above* all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in *this* world, but also in *that* which is to *come*;' 'all things are put under His feet;' and He is 'the head over all things to the church, which is *His* body, the fulness of Him that *filleth all in all*,' Eph. i. 20, 23. Christ possessed two natures, human and divine; in the one He endured the cross, and in the other He fills the throne.

Two thieves were crucified with Christ. We do not know the amount of knowledge which they previously had of the Jewish prophecies, but we do know that, though both at first reviled Christ, the truth suddenly flashed on one of them, as it did on the centurion, and he 'said unto Jesus, LORD, remember me when Thou comest into THY KINGDOM.' Was 'Lord' a complimentary term or an act of worship? Let the words, 'Thy kingdom,' explain it. The thief had now got over the mistake of supposing that Christ came to establish an earthly kingdom, and he addresses Him as Lord of the heavenly. Regarding Him as the Lamb slain for sin, he says, Lord remember even me, a poor dying malefactor, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom in heaven. And did Christ accept the worship, and answer the prayer? Christ could not encourage the

thief to rest His hopes on a false foundation. And what did Christ say in answer? Exactly as He blessed Thomas for calling Him 'my Lord and my God,' He blessed the dying thief. 'Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.' We dare not name the only alternative suggested by these words. Christ was either now accepting the worship and exercising the prerogative of God; or else—but we express no more.

We close with a few practical observations.

1. Surely we have conclusive evidence of God's hatred of sin, and love to the sinner, and that it is our duty, in humble and adoring gratitude, to accept of the freely offered salvation.

'Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd'st me come to Thee;
O Lamb of God I come.'

2. But we must not be content with *saying* we accept of such salvation; we must be *doing* the works which are required from those who, by such acceptance, if real, become God's peculiar people; *that is*, we must be 'zealous of good works.'

3. If in our conscience we are striving to fulfil these conditions, we are restored to the favour of God, and then how rich do we become? Rich! yes, Paul says all things are yours. 'Whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's,' 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. Seek ye then the kingdom of God, and all things shall be added to you,' Luke xii. 27-32. For 'He spared not His own Son;' and will 'He not with Him also freely give us all things?' Rom. viii. 32.

‘O Thou, the bounteous Giver of all good,
Thou art of all Thy gifts Thyself the crown;
Give what Thou can’st, without Thee we are poor,
And with Thee rich, take what Thou wilt away.’

4. If we can say this, we should be conscious of a growing resemblance to Jesus Christ. Praying for the influence of God’s spirit—

‘The soul whose sight, all quickening grace renews,
Takes the resemblance of the good she views,
As diamonds, stripped of their opaque disguise,
Reflect the noon-day glory of the skies.

And we will enjoy that peace which Christ promised when He said, ‘My peace I leave with you,’—‘let not your heart be troubled,’ John xiv. 27.

5. To preserve this peace, we must be careful to do no violence to the dictates of conscience in the smallest particular; and habitually look to God for the influence of His holy and promised spirit; for conscience is sometimes blinded and weak in the time of trial, though in the end it can sting like an adder. Strive to live in growing *preparation* for a better world. Into that world we shall enter with precisely the same *kind* of *character* which in God’s sight we bear at the time when we are called hence. Not one of us will ever be perfect here—certainly not. But we should be growing better. On the other hand, if here our character is daily growing worse, instead of better, judge what must be our fate hereafter?

TWENTY-FOURTH ADDRESS.

SOME OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction.—Phil. iii. 18, 19. Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.—1 Cor. i. 23.

IT is strange that there should be any ‘enemies of the cross of Christ.’ On that cross a great sacrifice was offered, and the blessings resulting from it are of infinite value, and are freely offered to us all. None would reject its blessings; but many are disinclined to submit to the *conditions* which the acceptance of these blessings require.

1. Some will not admit that eternal sufferings can justly be the punishment of the sins of a brief life, and profess to regard it as unreasonably severe. But discussion here is of no practical use. It is folly to disregard any law, if we cannot resist it. In the hands of God, we are as clay in the hands of the potter; moreover, our understanding, at its best, is so limited and depraved, that we are not capable of forming a correct opinion of what *any* sin deserves. The smallest sin involves rebellion against Jehovah; and He alone can correctly trace its evils and estimate its heinousness. However unwilling we may be to submit, yet assuredly at the great day of account, God will ‘bring forth His righteousness as the light, and His judgments as the noon-day,’ and fully vindicate the justice of all His ways. Let no man risk His eternal salvation on

any vague imagination, that God has threatened what He will not execute.

2. Others again rebel against the idea that they can do nothing to effect their own salvation ; and even assert that God's requiring obedience, implies that they are able sufficiently to obey ; and therefore they dislike to have salvation offered, merely as an act of mercy to guilty criminals. But surely if the sacrifice of Christ had not been necessary, before God could honourably be merciful, such a sacrifice would not have been made ; and we would never have heard of the Saviour's bitter cry, ' If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.'

3. It is not uncommon, however, to find people asserting that, though they cannot do all that is necessary to effect their salvation, their merits can at least go a considerable length towards that end, leaving the atonement and righteousness of Christ to supply their shortcomings. But if God has really provided a sufficient salvation, why rest on any other? But we read in 1 Cor. iii. 11, that ' other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' The Apostle Paul says, salvation is *not* of works, lest any man should boast. Good works are the result of a renewed heart ; but the sinner's acceptance by God is an act of mercy through Christ. ' By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified,' Rom. iii. 20. ' Where is boasting then? It is excluded,' Rom. iii. 27. Moreover, if Christ's atonement were *in any degree* supplementary, it would necessarily follow that *all men* would be saved, because in the most depraved character there is always some *degree* of remaining goodness, which might be supplemented. The most ferocious profligate will shed a tear over his ruined children. But the Word of God says, Ezek. xviii. 20-24, if a man sin, ' ALL his righteousness that he hath done *shall not be mentioned* ; in his trespass that he

hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.'

4. But some cavillers object, that in God's plan of redemption, it was not the guilty sinner, but the innocent Saviour, who suffered; and that here at least there is injustice. But if Christ's atoning death is acceptable to God, is not that enough for us? These cavillers forget that the alleged injustice disappears by the substitute having *voluntarily* offered himself. None in all the universe could have compelled Christ to suffer; and there was no moral obligation upon Him to suffer. What He did was done voluntarily, out of the depths of infinite and generous love. We have read in history of some rare instances of such voluntary substitution, which have moved our sympathy, without awakening any sense of injustice. In the instance of our blessed Saviour, He is prophesied in Psalm xl. 7, 8, as saying, 'Lo, I come. I *delight* to do Thy will, O my God.' And, as if to meet this very objection, Christ himself says in John x. 17, 18, 'Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, etc. No man taketh it from Me, but I LAY IT DOWN OF MYSELF. I *have power to lay it down*, and I have power to take it again.' And did He not, when the time approached that He was to die, stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem? When the officers came to apprehend Him, at His potent voice, 'I AM,' 'they went backward, and fell to the ground,' John xviii. 6. How easily could Christ then have done, as He did once before, when the people wished to make Him a king, walk through the midst of them and disappear? But for this cause came He into the world, that He might die, the just for the unjust; and He who rendered Himself invisible to avoid being made a king, voluntarily submitted Himself, as a lamb to the slaughter, to be made a sacrifice.

But the complaint that the innocent died for the guilty, contains the important admission, that Christ *was* innocent. The objectors should think what this leads to. Christ could not be absolutely innocent and free from all sin, unless every word He spoke were absolutely true; and if every word He spoke was true, what defence have they, who fail to *believe every word* that He spoke?

5. And then, if He suffered, being absolutely innocent, we ask these objectors, why did He suffer? They say, and ask us to believe,

That Christ suffered only for the purpose of confirming the truth of His doctrines, and not as an atonement for sin. This assertion, which is subversive of the entire gospel scheme, is avowed in a book published by a noble earl, who long occupied a prominent place in the political world. His authority may encourage sceptics. We meet it by referring to the Bible—the statements in which must be accepted by all who believe in its inspiration. His Lordship avers, that the sacrifice of Christ is available *in so far as* it gave evidence of the truth of such doctrines as love, obedience, and resignation to the will of God, the assurance of everlasting life and other doctrines, but nothing more. He boldly alleges, that those Christians who hold that salvation is obtained through the sacrifice of Christ, misrepresent God; and He adds, that they have *mistaken the meaning* of the Apostle Paul, if they think that ‘he taught the doctrine, that God was so angry with man, that nothing but the death of His Son could appease His fury.’

If we were arguing only with the noble earl, we would respectfully ask him, whether he does not dishonour God when he says, that God permitted His innocent Son to suffer death, *merely* in order to confirm doctrines announced by God? Is the word of God not of itself sufficient? or, if

proof be required that the doctrine really came from God, would not a benevolent miracle, instead of Christ's death, have afforded sufficient proof? Such a miracle as healing the sick, or opening the eyes of the blind, wrought at the command of any one for the purpose of proving that what He says is true, would be enough. Elijah, who delivered a message in the name of God, gave sufficient evidence of its truth, when, in answer to his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed his sacrifice ; on which, all the people who saw it, fell on their faces, and said, ' The Lord He is the God, the Lord He is the God,' 1 Kings xviii. 30-48. Christ himself said, ' The works that I do, they bear witness,' John x. 25. His doctrines were proved by His miracles ; but His death could no more prove the truth of His doctrines, than the deaths of the mistaken devotees, who threw themselves beneath the wheels of the car of Juggernaut, proved the truth of their doctrines. Their deaths only proved that they *believed*, but certainly did not prove that their doctrines were true. It would have been more like the goodness of God, that Christ's exemplary life and truth should have been rewarded by some such triumph as that conferred on Elijah, who was carried gloriously up into heaven, rather than by the infliction of sufferings and death.

But any further discussion with the noble earl is unnecessary, for this simple reason, that he expressly admits that the Scriptures *were inspired by God*. He rejoices that they are so ; and says it is only in them that we have any reliable assurance of life beyond the grave. In consequence of this admission, the purpose for which Christ died is obviously withdrawn from the field of argument, and resolved into this simple question—What saith the Scriptures?

In answer, we refer to the numerous quotations from the Bible, which we gave in our last address. Moreover,

the Apostle John says, 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the PROPITIATION for our sins,' 1 John iv. 10. The word *propitiation* means, any atonement by which the reconciliation of an offended party is obtained. John says, in 1 John ii. 2, Jesus Christ the righteous is the *propitiation* for our sins; and Paul says, in Rom. iii. 24, 25, 'being justified freely by grace through the REDEMPTION that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a PROPITIATION through faith in His blood.' There certainly can be no mistake here; nor in the words of Paul elsewhere. In Hebrews ix. 22, Paul says, 'Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no *remission*.' To meet the case that under the old law, typical sacrifices were offered up daily, in ver. 25 Paul explains that it was not necessary that Christ should repeat the offering of Himself; ver. 26, 'for then must He *often* have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now *ONCE* in the end of the world hath He appeared to *put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself*. Ver. 27, And as it is appointed unto all men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was *once offered to bear the sins of many*.' Chap. x. 4, For it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin; ver. 10, but 'we are sanctified through the *offering* of the *body of Jesus Christ once for all*;' ver. 11, 'and every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; ver. 12, 'but this man (Christ), after He had offered *ONE SACRIFICE* for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God;' ver. 19, 'having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest, by the *blood of Jesus*;' ver. 20, 'by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, His *flesh*;' ver. 21, 'and having an High Priest over the house

of God ;' ver. 22, 'let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith ;' but, ver. 26, 'if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there *remaineth no more sacrifice* for sins ;' ver. 27, 'but a certain fearful looking for of judgment ;' 'All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath *laid on Him* (the Saviour) the *iniquities* of us all,' Isa. liii. 6. 'He was *made sin for us*, though He knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him,' 2 Cor. v. 21. Christ's reward is the redemption 'of a great multitude whom no man can number,' who 'have *washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*,' Rev. vii. 9-14. 'Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,' Rom. v. 1. 'For when we were without strength, in due time *Christ died for the ungodly*,' ver. 6. 'For scarcely for a righteous man will *one die*, yet peradventure for a good man some *would even dare to die*,' ver. 7. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were *yet sinners*, CHRIST DIED FOR US,' ver. 8. This is my blood, says Christ, in the holy communion, shed for many for their sins. The whole Jewish ceremonial dispensation was designed to prepare the world for the appearance of the Lamb of God, who was to *redeem* us by the shedding of His own 'precious blood.' One Lamb was sacrificed as a token of the atonement, and another was allowed to escape in token that sin was thereby borne away. 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us,' Gal. iii. 13. 'He gave Himself as a RANSOM for us,' 1 Tim. ii. 6. May we all be among those who shall at last sing, 'worthy art Thou who wast slain, and hast REDEEMED us to God by Thy blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Amen !'

6. Sceptics delight to remind us that the Gospel of Christ has not yet reached all the nations of the earth. This is, to a great extent, the shame of Christians, but it is a cause of rejoicing, that that which began to be preached at Jerusalem, is spreading throughout the world with a progress which is quite unparalleled, not by the aid of the sword, but in spite of it. All thoughtful men feel assured, from the progress already made, that the promise will be fulfilled, that the gospel shall fill the earth as the waters cover the channel of the deep. It is no objection that much remains to be done. In the meantime, all may rest assured, that God will treat the heathen righteously. But how He will treat them till Christians have done their duty, is not a question for us. We might as well inquire, why God left the fallen angels to perish. God has impressed some natural laws on the hearts of all men, according to which He will judge the heathen justly, Rom. v. 13. What we have mainly to do with is the fact, that the gospel has come *to us*, and that a great responsibility is thereby laid on us to accept it for ourselves, and to do what we can to spread the knowledge of it to others. If we perish, it will not be because we are under any natural incapacity to investigate and understand the truth, but because we yield to our natural aversion to it.

We may be disinclined to surrender ourselves, soul, body, and spirit, to God. But we will not be finally punished because we *could* not, but because we *would* not, receive Divine truth. 'How often would I have gathered thee,' said Christ to the Jews, 'as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not,' Matt. xxiii. 37. The words of Christ are quite explicit—'Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life,' John v. 40. 'The spirit and bride say, Come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely,' Rev. xxii. 17.

Lastly.—We close at present by noticing one additional objection. Scoffers often refer to the differences of opinion and dissensions, which too largely exist among professing Christians; and undoubtedly these dissensions are to be regretted. But after all, it is not so much about the *essentials* of Christianity, as about comparatively unimportant circumstances connected with it, that such differences exist. The evil eye of the sceptic detects shadowy differences, without looking at substantial agreements. On this subject we cannot do better than quote from the writings of the late reverend Dean Ramsay, who said, ‘We may thank God that there *is* agreement on questions of vital importance.’ He describes these questions in the following very satisfactory terms :—The obligation to keep holy a Christian Sabbath—the primary authority and inspiration of Holy Scripture, so far as containing all things needful for man’s salvation, and full direction for walking in the way to eternal life—the unity of the Godhead and His great attributes of omnipresence, omniscience, eternity, self-existence, perfection of justice, purity, and holiness—the unity of the divine nature, a threefold Trinity of persons, the majesty and the glory—equal and co-eternal—the divinity and humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the second person of the Trinity, who became incarnate, and assumed the humanity of man’s nature, in order that He might make atonement for sin, and offer on the cross a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; that besides coming to Jesus as a Saviour and a Redeemer, we must come to Him as a teacher and an example—that fitness for the kingdom of heaven implies an imitation of His life and sentiments, as well as a profession of His name—an obedience to His precepts, no less than a belief in His doctrines; that in one word, without holiness no man shall see the Lord. On

these points it is delightful to think how much *uniformity* of opinion prevails in the Christian world; and how generally they have been maintained by the best and ablest writers of Christian Churches, differing from each other in many particulars of ecclesiastical discipline.'

Notwithstanding of all this, it is deplorable to find Christian Churches, which confessedly agree 'in doctrine, polity, and discipline,' and hold the same Confession of Faith, wrangling about miserable minor questions, which have no bearing whatever on the great question of questions, for which Churches were instituted. This wrangling bears bitter fruits—it provokes the sneer of the infidel, and furnishes him with an argument against all attempts to spread and maintain Christianity (about which there is such a vast preponderance of agreement) in districts, also too many, where it is urgently required, and even against the public duty of giving religious instruction to the young,—for he tauntingly calls on Christian men to agree first among themselves. Unnecessary divisions between churches are schismatic, and schism is sin. The obvious duty required at all churches, like the duty of different wings of an army in face of a common enemy, is hearty co-operation and support—not wrangling.

TWENTY-FIFTH ADDRESS.

OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are ONE.—

1 John v. 7.

Scaled by the Holy Spirit, which is the earnest of our inheritance.—Eph. i. 13, 14.

MOST men, at first sight, are readily enough disposed to accept salvation, were it not that God, who, at a great price, purchased it, and offers it freely, does not offer it unconditionally. If we are to be saved, it must be accepted simply as offered; but it is not offered with liberty to continue in the love or practice of any sin. On the contrary, those who accept it must strive to avoid what is offensive, and to do what is right in the sight of God. Through Christ's atoning death it is consistent with God's justice to say, 'Return to the Lord, and He will have mercy;' but then, in connection with this, it is also said, 'let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts,' Isa. lv. 7.

On the one hand—

'Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me;
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
O! Lamb of God, I come.'

And, on the other hand, if we feel the slightest gratitude

and love to Christ, who has done all for us—the slightest repentance on account of sin, which brought Him to the cross—if we are really depending on His finished work as the only ground of our hopes—if we are really anxious now, for reconciliation with God, and to dwell with Him hereafter, how can we,

‘The children’s highest privilege claim
And act the rebel still?’

It is impossible. The unaffected language of those who are truly loving Christ is, ‘Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee, Psalm lxxiii. 25.

If we be in this condition of mind, striving habitually to please God; in other words, if we have accepted salvation as *it is offered*, we will be conscious of a daily struggle within us to forsake every wicked way and thought. That is the *test*. We may, we will, often fail in the struggle; but if our faith be real, we will be like the warrior, who has no choice in the battle, we must fight on. Like *Christian*, in the Pilgrim’s Progress, we may not only have a sad fight, but may often feel disheartened by defeats. *Apollyon* may taunt us. ‘Ye were almost choked in the slough of despond—thou didst attempt wrong ways—thou didst sinfully sleep—thou wert almost persuaded to go back—and when thou talkest of thy journey, thou art inwardly desirous of vain glory;’ to which, like *Christian*, we must answer, ‘all this is true, and much more which thou hast left untold, and I groan under it; but the Prince whom I serve is ready to forgive.’ In the struggle, *Christian* caught *Apollyon*’s flaming darts on his shield of faith; and though the combat lasted long, and till, by reason of his wounds, he began to despair, yet, at length, grasping the sword of the Spirit, he repelled

the assailant, exclaiming, 'Rejoice not over me, O mine enemy, when I fall I shall rise again.' 'Then came to him a hand, with some leaves of the tree of life.' But before this struggle, *Christian* had undergone a *change*. He had fled from the city of destruction, at first with the burden on his back, he had entered through the wicket-gate over which was written, 'Knock and it shall be opened,' and had gone on till he came to a place upon which stood a cross, and just as he looked at it, his burden fell from off his shoulders, and he saw it no more; then he got a change of garment, led a new life, and perseveringly went on his way rejoicing, justified and sanctified, though under many trials, difficulties, and dangers, till at last, notwithstanding all his failures, he finally entered into the celestial city.

But all this is distasteful to the unrenewed heart. The *condition* of salvation is the difficulty. It is precisely to meet this difficulty that God has promised to bestow the influences of the Holy Spirit on those who ask Him, Luke xi. 13.

Having formerly adverted to the two-fold nature of Christ, and to the object of His coming into the world, let us now consider what is revealed regarding the Holy Spirit.

The great object of redemption is not merely our deliverance from the punishment, but also from the power and love of sin. We have seen that Christ died for our justification; but before we can be admitted into heaven, we must be qualified to mingle in its company.

All men, however depraved, would like to get to heaven; just as the tempest-tossed mariner would like to reach the land. But before we can enter heaven, we must be radically changed—a change like that which a roaming and reckless savage must undergo before he can

submit to the restraints, and enjoy the refinements of civilized life. The change is so great, that it is compared in the Bible, to a new birth—to life from the dead—and to the opening of the eyes of the blind. It is a change of all our habits, inclinations, and affections. It is the creation within us of a new ‘heart and a right spirit,’ which we cannot accomplish of ourselves, any more than the Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots. But in the plan of redemption God has made provision for effecting this marvellous change. Felons are frequently saved from punishment by a free pardon, who remain as desperately wicked as ever. But this does not occur in the economy of redemption. Those whom, through Christ, God pardons, He changes through His Spirit, and makes fit for heaven. The Divine Agent in this great work is the Holy Ghost.

This leads us to inquire, what is revealed regarding the Holy Ghost? In seeking to obtain a true answer, we must become thoughtful and humble readers of God’s word, in the temper of mind recommended by Bishop Whately, desiring not to get Scripture on our side, but to be found on the side of Scripture.

We are accustomed to call the Holy Ghost a person, because *action* is attributed to Him, and the *third* person, because such seems to be the order of the divine administration in the work of redemption.

Wherever we find *thought* directed to the accomplishment of any specific object, and employing the requisite means for its attainment, we must admit that some Being so thinking and acting exists, however mysterious and incomprehensible the nature of that Being may be. Now, we find from the Bible, that design and agency are ascribed to the Holy Spirit, who is said to be sent to teach, and to abide with, and to guide God’s people.

The Saviour, who assures us that whosoever believeth in Him shall never perish, also said, that 'except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,' John iii. 3. And when Nicodemus inquired how this could be, Christ answered, 'that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye *must* be born again,' ver. 6, 7. We have, therefore, a deep and personal interest in this inquiry. In the operations of the Spirit we have another mystery. Nicodemus was anxious to have it solved; but all that Christ saw fit to tell him about it was, 'that the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit,' ver. 8. It is unseen—sometimes scarcely felt, though progressive. We will speak of its fruits hereafter.

In 1 John v. 7, we read, 'For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the WORD, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.' The *Word* means Christ, which was made flesh and dwelt among us,' John i. 14.

In the 19th verse of the 28th chapter of Matthew, we are told, that Christ said to His disciples, 'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Thus the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, are placed on the same throne. The conception of a command, applicable to the whole world, till the end of time, being issued in the name of the uncreated and infinite Jehovah, who will not give His glory to another, *jointly* with any of His creatures, is not to be presumed. The terms in the divine commission and apostolic benediction, exclude such an idea. They run in the name of the

FATHER, Son, and Holy Ghost ; of whom it is repeatedly said, ' these three are one.'

In John i. 33 we read, that ' He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining the same, is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.' Here there is mention of three distinct Beings—1. the Father sending; 2. the Spirit descending; and 3. the Son on whom the Spirit descended: all in harmony with the apostolic benediction in 2 Corinthians xiii. 14. ' The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.'

In John xiv. 16, 17, Christ says, ' I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may *abide* with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth.' Ver. 26, ' He shall *teach* you all things.' And in John xv. 26, ' When the Comforter (which is the Holy Ghost), is come, He shall *testify* of Me.' In the 16th chapter of John, verses 7 to 14, Christ told His disciples, ' It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send HIM unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; ' and so on. ' He will guide you into all truth,' etc. ' He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.' In these verses, which form part of Christ's last sermon, we find the Holy Ghost spoken of as being *sent*,—*as coming*, *abiding*—*guiding*, as being the *witness* of Christ, thereby glorifying Christ,—and as being the *reprover* of sin. Christ assured His disciples that when they were brought before magistrates and powers (as He told them they would be for His name's sake), they need take no thought what they should say, for Luke xii. 12, ' the

Holy Ghost shall *teach* you in the same hour what ye ought to say.' In all these respects He is represented as *acting*.

In fulfilment of Christ's promise to send the Holy Ghost to His disciples, we read in the 2d chapter of the Acts, that when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place ; and ver. 4, 'they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance ;' and ver. 7, 8, 'all were amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? and how hear we every man in our own tongue?' This was an *extraordinary* and miraculous act of the Spirit's administration ; but it certainly does not the less, but only the more strongly, prove His existence.

We read in Acts xiii. 2, that as the apostles ministered to the Lord and fasted, 'the HOLY GHOST *said*, Separate *Me* Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto *I* have called them ;' which being done, they, ver. 4, were 'sent forth by the Holy Ghost,' etc. In Acts xv. 28, we read, 'for it seemed good to the HOLY GHOST,' etc. Again, in Acts xvi. 6, 7, it is said, 'they were *forbidden* of the HOLY GHOST to preach the Word in Asia.' Again, in Acts xxi. 11, 'Thus saith the HOLY GHOST, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man (Paul) that owneth this girdle.' It enhances our admiration for Paul when we, nevertheless, find him, like Christ, setting his face to go to Jerusalem, though He knew that 'the Holy Ghost had witnessed that bonds and afflictions' awaited him there.

When Stephen was on his trial, he said (Acts vii. 51), 'Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the HOLY GHOST : as your fathers did, so do ye.' It was not their having murdered the Lord of Glory, but this last charge of resisting the Holy Ghost, which caused Stephen's judges to feel cut to the heart.

They had sacrificed Christ through their malice, and they had declared open war against His doctrines; but their own religion recognised the existence of the Holy Ghost; and Stephen's charge, that they had resisted the Holy Ghost, was therefore one which they could not endure, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

This was indeed a serious charge, because all manner of sin and blasphemy against Christ shall be forgiven, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men, Matt. xii. 31. It is not blasphemy against a mere *doctrine* that is here forbidden. In this case Christ, as Son of man, or in His human nature and the Holy Spirit, are set forth in some distinctive sense. The existence of the Holy Spirit was not a new doctrine introduced by Christ and His apostles. Throughout the whole of the Old Testament, the HOLY GHOST is often spoken of. 'Uphold me,' says David, 'by Thy free Spirit,' Ps. li. 12. 'Whither shall I flee from Thy Spirit,' Ps. cxxxix. 7. 'Thy Spirit is good,' Ps. cxliii. 10, 'Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high,' Isa. xxxii. 15. 'And now the Lord God AND HIS SPIRIT hath sent me,' Isa. xlviii. 16; and so on in many other passages. The Spirit referred to in such verses is identical with the Holy Ghost, as appears from Acts xxviii. 25 and 27, where Paul says, 'Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand,' etc., the original verses being found in Isaiah. 'Thou sendeth forth Thy SPIRIT, they are created,' Ps. civ. 30. In Isa. xi. 2, 3, we find the 'Spirit of the Lord' spoken of as resting, quickening, and working, as well as giving wisdom and understanding. See also Judges iii. 10; vi. 34; xi. 29. Further, in the communications mentioned in the Old Testament, made by God to men through the prophets, it is continually said,

that God spake to them through the Spirit; and Peter states, that 'the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men OF GOD spake as they were moved by THE HOLY GHOST,' 2 Peter i. 21. The Old Testament is full of similar statements. On the strength of them, together with those of the new, we conclude that—

1. The Holy Ghost is, in some inscrutable and unrevealed sense, a distinct divine Essence. 2. And, in the second place, that He is one with God.

The peculiar underived and incommunicable prerogatives and attributes of God are ascribed to the Spirit. For example—

1. Eternal existence is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. 'How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the *eternal Spirit*, offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience,' Heb. ix. 14.

2. Omniscience is attributed to the Holy Ghost. 'The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God,' 1 Cor. ii. 10; and 'the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God,' ver. 11. The Holy Ghost knows them all, and reveals whatever it is necessary for us to know. Again—

3. Omnipotence is ascribed to the Holy Ghost. 'If the SPIRIT of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit,' Rom. viii. 11.

4. The Holy Spirit is revealed as exercising both extraordinary and ordinary influences. And miracles are said, in 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9, 10, to be the *work* of the SPIRIT;—to one person 'is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom;' to another the word 'of knowledge by the SAME SPIRIT;' to another 'the gifts of healing by the SAME SPIRIT,'—all these working by 'ONE and the SELF-SAME SPIRIT.'

In regard to the *ordinary* administration of the Holy Spirit, we read in Rom. viii. 13, 'if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.'

1. The Spirit opens the heart to receive the truth, and thus begins the work of regeneration,' John iii. 5. It is the man who is born of the Spirit who shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. The natural man knoweth not the things of the Spirit: the Holy Ghost teacheth us, 1 Cor. ii. 11-14, and gives the light of the knowledge of the glory of God through Jesus Christ.

2. The Holy Spirit sanctifies us, Gal. v. 22, not by making known any truths beyond what are revealed in the Bible, nor by altering our natural faculties; but, if we prayerfully ask, by enabling us to feel the power and to submit to the influences of the gospel. Lydia's heart was opened, so that she attended unto the things that were spoken of Paul, Acts xvi. 14. In conversion our natural powers and faculties remain; but they get a new and noble direction. The principle which guides the converted man is obedience to the will of God, and his object now is to please God. Be not discouraged if natural impulsiveness, or even violence of temper, be not suddenly changed; but then these faults must be daily struggled against, and eventually, if conversion be real, they will sooner or later be overcome.

3. When the work of holiness in the heart is begun, the Holy Spirit carries on till it be completed. 'When the Spirit of Truth is come, He shall *guide* you unto all truth,' John xvi. 13. 'The gifts and calling of God are without repentance, Rom. xi. 29. 'He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ,' Phil. i. 6. 'And ye shall never perish,' John x. 28.

4. The consciousness of the Holy Spirit's influence on

the heart is a pledge of our ultimate glory and felicity. We read in Romans viii. 14-17, that 'the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God.' Again, 'that he seals us,' 2 Cor. i. 21, 22, and giveth us the earnest of future glory: see 2 Cor. v. 5. The same truth is repeated in Eph. i. 13, 14, 'in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.'

'Eternal Spirit, we confess,
And sing the wonders of Thy grace ;
Thy power conveys all blessings down,
From God the Father and the Son.'

Without the work of Christ no foundation could be laid for the exercise of God's mercy ; and without the work of the Spirit no sinner would have been induced to build his hopes on that sure foundation. Without the work of Christ no way to heaven is opened up ; and without the work of the Spirit no sinner would have been induced to walk in that blessed way. The work of Christ provides pardon, and the work of the Spirit induces us to plead that pardon. It is the Holy Spirit's work to enlighten our understandings, and to lead us to Christ, for, 1 Cor. ii. 14, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. The phrase, the natural man, does not mean merely the openly wicked. It simply means the unregenerated man, that is, every human being, until he is taught to feel that he needs a Saviour fairer than the sons of men, the chief of ten thousand, and altogether lovely.

The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffer-

ing, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. None can bear such fruit, who, in the solemn language of the Holy Scripture, 'are in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity,' Acts viii. 23.

We close by inviting you to contemplate the richness and freeness, and the fulness, of Divine grace. Does God give pardon? He gives it fully. Does He sanctify? He does it wholly in body, soul, and spirit. Does He give peace? He gives what passeth all understanding. Does He give strength? He gives it by His Spirit, leading us to victory. He does not restrict any of His blessings, or give them sparingly. He who gave Christ, gives *all* things necessary and freely for salvation. See then that in our daily prayers we ask not only mercy, but also the influence of the Holy Spirit to sanctify our hearts for the sake of Christ.

'Our blessed Redeemer, ere He breathed
His tender, last farewell,
A guide, or comforter bequeathed
With us to dwell.
Spirit of purity and grace,
Our weakness, pitying, see ;
O make our hearts Thy dwelling-place,
And worthier of Thee.'

TWENTY-SIXTH ADDRESS.

THE HOLY SPIRIT OFFERED.

Your heavenly Father gives the Holy Spirit to them who ask Him.—Luke xi. 13.

Quench not the Spirit.—1 Thess. v. 19.

At our last meeting we noticed what is revealed concerning the Holy Ghost.

It is sometimes asked, How can we help it, if the Holy Spirit be not conferred on us? We must be careful to avoid taking the position which is implied in such a question; for God says, 'if ye know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things TO THEM THAT ASK HIM?' Matt. vii. 2. *Again*, 'If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the HOLY SPIRIT to them that ask Him?' Luke xi. 13. And yet *again*, Ask and it SHALL be given you, seek and ye SHALL find,' Matt. vii. 7.

Let us therefore, for Christ's sake, perseveringly and fervently ask and pray. If we do not so, we have no right to utter a complaint full of reproach against God, who has promised that none shall seek His face in vain. One great *object* of revelation is to bring us from our naturally sinful condition to a state of holiness, and the great *means* by which this is effected, is the influence of the Spirit of God. Being offered for the asking, we cannot be allowed to say, how can we be blamed if His Spirit does not come

into our hearts? A sovereign once wished to pardon a criminal, who was under sentence of death for treason, but he resolved that, unless the heart of the criminal was changed, he must die. Having disguised himself, the sovereign entered the dungeon, and asked the criminal whether, if he could successfully intercede for him and procure his pardon, he would thereafter love his sovereign? The reply was—‘No. I hate him so intensely, that even if he were now to pardon me, I would hate him;’ whereupon the sovereign withdrew, and left the prisoner to his doom. The sovereign did not condescend to implore the traitor to accept a conditional pardon. But if we read through the 54th and 55th pathetic chapters of Isaiah, we will find God actually *pleading* with the sinner to accept mercy. Not only throughout these chapters, but in many others, God offers to produce that very change in our hearts towards Himself which the earthly sovereign could not accomplish. He offers the agency of His Spirit. It is offered for the asking. He says, Why will ye die? He reasons with you. If ye know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father, who is in heaven, give His Spirit to those who ask Him? ‘Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us,’ Gal. iii. 13, ‘that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith,’ ver. 14—a promise to the contrite for the *asking*, Eph. i. 17.

On the strength of these, and similar passages, we affirm that if through faith in Christ we earnestly supplicate the outpouring of God’s Spirit on our hearts, the prayer will *not be refused*.

But how is *this* faith to be produced? We answer, Just as faith in any fact in science, or history, is produced—that is, by patient and anxious investigation. A jury-

man on a trial listens attentively ; puts together, and *considers* all the evidence anxiously, and pronounces the conviction at which he has arrived. He states his *belief*. In like manner, let the Bible be dealt with as the evidence on a trial is dealt with, and let daily prayer be superadded, and we will become convinced that God has done all for us ; provided blood to cleanse us, righteousness to cover us, and His Spirit to renew us, and guide us to Himself. God will be inquired after. If we will not do so, we must perish : but it will remain for ever true that He NEVER said to any, Seek ye my face in vain. As a *means* of grace, sincere prayer cannot be overrated. It will command the blessing—perhaps not immediately, nor even in the way we wish. Its first impression may even be disappointing, and yet God may thereby be only drawing us more closely to himself ; or, perhaps, He may see it fit to answer us, in a way the very opposite of our wishes—which may yet be the best.

HENRY KIRK-WHITE prayed, at the early age of twenty-one, for a little longer life. That prayer was not answered. He wrote this touching prayer :

‘ O Thou who visitest the sons of men,
Thou who dost listen when the humble pray—
One little space prolong my mournful day ;
One little space suspend Thy last decree.
I am a youthful traveller in the way,
And this slight boon would consecrate to Thee,
Ere I shake hands with death, and smile that I am free.’

He died shortly afterwards. His prayer was *not* answered as he *wished*. But may it not be, that the answer which he received, was *better* than that for which he prayed ? May not His heavenly Father have said, ‘ that young heart is too gentle for a rough world. He asks a little life. In

My presence he shall have more than he asks—fulness of joy and life for evermore !’

By way of improvement, let us ask ourselves, Have we received the Spirit of God ? Under His influence are we walking along the way to heaven ? Can we know this ? Does a traveller know whether he is making progress on a journey ? The Spirit of God produces a radical change. Can the changed one be ignorant of it ? There is no rule for the Spirit’s working. On the heart of one man He produces conviction of sin, ‘O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death ?’ Rom. vii. 24. On another, the fear of eternal punishment may send him to Christ. In the case of Felix, as Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, he trembled, Acts xxiv. 25. The jailer cried out, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved ?’ Acts xvi. 29, 30 ; while others may be overpowered by a sense of the forbearance of God, and the love and sufferings of Christ, and may be led to exclaim, ‘We love Him *because* He first loved us,’ 1 John iv. 19. A minister once was about to refuse a poor woman admission to the Lord’s table, because the views which she *expressed* of Christ seemed to be defective. ‘I cannot speak for Him, but I could die for Him,’ said the woman—‘Enough,’ said the minister. But in whatever way the Spirit of God works, an entire and conscious ‘it may be a progressive change of heart, is produced ; so that the man is no longer disposed to flee from God as his enemy, but to go to God as his refuge. From this good fruits spring. Loving, we insensibly become imitators of our blessed Saviour. ‘I love the Lord,’ said David, ‘for He hath delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling, and *therefore* I will *walk* before the Lord, and pay unto Him my vows.’ ‘The fruit of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22, 23, is love, joy,

peace, long-suffering, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.' Now conscience, formerly a disregarded monitor, grows faithful and influential. The 'still, small voice' within grows in power; and the question, 'Shall I do this wicked thing, and sin against God?' is no longer despised. Thus the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, Rom. viii. 16.

Has the Holy Spirit begun to show these precious influences in you? His entrance into your heart may have been as gentle as the dawn of day; but can you now say, whereas all was once dark, now light dawns? once I was blind, now I see? once I sinned without compunction, now I struggle to avoid sin? O, do not yield in such a struggle! It may be a movement within you of God's Spirit, and who knows but it may be the last, for God says, 'I will not always strive with man.' It may be the call, Why will ye die? It may be a last call. If living thoughtlessly, you have never felt this, you have cause for alarm. But if you feel alarm, thank God for it. Beware of indifference. God's Spirit is *offered* to all; to 'whomsoever believeth.' It is offered *immediately*—'To-day, if ye will hear His voice.' It is offered *urgently*—'Behold, I stand at the door and knock.' It is offered *affectionately*—'Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden.' It is offered *freely*—'without money and without price.' It may *never be offered* to you again—'Thou fool, this night thy soul may be required of thee.' The command, 'pray without ceasing' 1 Thess. v. 17, is no vain command. The promise, 'Ask and it shall be given,' Mat. vii. 7, is no vain promise. The assurance that your heavenly Father will give 'good gifts,' is no vain delusion. 'Ask and ye SHALL receive, John xvi. 24, that your joy may be full.'

Were your natural life in danger, would you not both

cry and struggle? So pray. No answer! Continue to pray. The husbandman cannot make the seed grow, but he casts it into the ground and waits. Persevering prayer will bring down God's blessing. It will dispel the darkest cloud. It will reveal the mercy-seat. It will become a ladder to enable us to approach it. If we were more prayerful

‘Our cheerful song would oftener be,
Hear what the Lord has done for me.’

Or, in the words of COWPER :

‘Where’er we seek Thee, Thou art found,
And every place is hallowed ground.
Here may we prove the power of prayer,
To strengthen faith and sweeten care.
To teach our faint desires to rise,
And bring all heaven before our eyes.
Lord, we are weak, but Thou art near,
Nor short Thine arm, nor deaf Thine ear.
Oh, rend the heavens! come quickly down,
And make our waiting hearts Thine own.’

Pray, therefore, as if you could do nothing, and strive as if you could do everything, keeping your eye fixed with all earnestness on the cross of Christ :—

‘None ever perished there.’

Yet one further advice. Join yourselves in church fellowship to those who fear the Lord, and thereby openly confess your allegiance to Christ. It is a great safeguard and duty. Such, says Christ, ‘will I confess before My Father who is in heaven.’ The well done, good and faithful servant, from the lips of Jesus hereafter, will be a glorious reward.

Lastly, let us not overlook the last motto prefixed to this address—'Quench not the Spirit.' This is very brief, but very solemn. Here the Spirit of God is compared to a fire, which may be extinguished in two ways—either by violence or neglect.

1. We quench the influences of the Spirit of God, by wilfully doing violence to His teaching, and sinning against conviction. A debauchee, whose eyesight was impaired by vice, was told, by his medical adviser, that unless he reformed, he would lose his sight. 'Farewell blessed eyesight,' exclaimed with a sigh, this miserable victim to vice. The man who acts in this way can only expect 'a fearful looking for of indignation,' which will devour God's adversaries.

2. But let us be warned that we may come to the same end, simply by *neglecting* the still small voice. Neglect an ordinary fire, and in a little it becomes extinguished. To be kept alive, it must be supplied with fuel, and watched. If we neglect the gentle influences of God's Spirit, and become lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, they become extinguished.

The punishment for this neglect is not always, nor perhaps generally, reserved for the next world. It is often inflicted in this. The fool who lives recklessly ; the drunkard who, revelling in his cups, destroys his health and intellect, and ruins those who are dependent on him, often in this world reap punishment. But the peril is, that when too late, men may realise the sad import of the words of Isaiah, repeated by our Saviour in Mark iv. 12, that 'Seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear, and not understand.' Of such the Holy Spirit may take leave for ever, saying, 'They have joined themselves to idols ; leave them alone.'

The inferences from all this are obvious.

TWENTY-SEVENTH ADDRESS.

ON EVIL INFLUENCES AND ERRORS.

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men.—Col. ii. 8.

As you must, in ordinary business, mix in general society, it may not be unsuitable to notice a few of the *evil influences* to which you will unavoidably be exposed.

We stay not to speak of the baneful effects

I.—*Of bad Company;*

because they are so obvious, that you need no advice to avoid all voluntary intercourse with persons who ‘leave the paths of righteousness’—and who ‘make a mock of sin.’

But there are individuals, reputed respectable, who disseminate pernicious opinions, under the guise of free discussion; and there are others, who propagate errors of an opposite description, founded on the ‘traditions of men,’ against all of which we desire to warn you. Some errors are not at first sight very startling; others have a kind of fascination for the inquisitive and inexperienced; and some are not disagreeable to our fallen nature. They are held by individuals among whom there is little agreement, except in their dislike of the gospel. We can only advert to what may be called two extremes of these errors—the one held by free-thinkers, who question everything; and the other held by superstitious devotees, with whom

mystery is charming, and who blindly accept whatever is taught by the Priesthood. They assume at present a somewhat prominent appearance. We wish, for the sake of our country, we could compare them to what we hope they may soon be—the roll for a moment of the waves of a tide about to recede.

We proceed to notice—

II.—*The infidel creed, said to be based on the discoveries of Science.*

When science is spoken of in connection with matter, we do not object to reasonable deductions from ascertained facts. There are facts both in religion and science; but they admit of the most distinct and separate classification. One class relates to God's moral government of His rational creatures; the other to His works in creation. We need not fear that there ever will or can be any actual collision between what is manifestly so distinct. Unfortunately, however, we come daily into contact with sceptics, who draw one-sided deductions from assumed or imperfectly ascertained facts in the natural world, and boldly assert that these are antagonistic to, and more reliable than, the utterance of revealed religion. Some sceptics avoid all direct reference to the Word of God, and content themselves with insidiously propagating views which they must know are hostile to it. If these men were really in the right, it should be easy for them to demonstrate, with unerring certainty, that their pretended discoveries and deductions were absolutely true. But in this they fail.

Their grand leading topic is the pretended and astounding discovery, that we, who are 'fearfully and wonderfully made,' and gifted, as Shakespeare says, 'with

God-like reason,' are only the development of unconscious germs or atoms ! So say they who can only know in part, if they know anything at all, of what happened thousands of years ago, and of which we have no *direct* evidence whatever. Material atoms, they say, existed in space, which were drawn together or attracted by countless other atoms, individually without intelligence, and yet (though to be sure it took them countless millions of ages in which to do it), they finally did that which, the Bible tells us, was only done by the Word of God. These men disregard the question written in the Book of Job, 'Where wert thou when the foundations of the earth were laid ?' And they have not imitated the modesty of the Christian philosopher, who left an imperishable name, and who, after a long life of profound investigations, scarcely exceeded by any living man, compared himself to a child gathering shells on the sea-shore, leaving the depths of ocean unexplored. Such men, who now-a-days regard no bygone period as too remote for their researches, tell us gravely, that they have discovered the origin of man. It was the work of atoms ! These atoms, for the origin of which they do not undertake to account, were at first infinitesimally small, and, as they are obliged to admit, incapable of thought, but they were drawn together, or attracted in such numbers, as to be sufficient to form millions of inconceivably large suns and stars with attendant moons ; and though neither separately, nor in combination, were there any thought in these atoms, they produced, after countless ages, not only all the material universe, and all the laws which govern it, but also, they assumed on earth the form and structure of man, with the power of thought, and of executing almost anything which thought designed. This absolutely looks like raving. We are asked to believe, that the unconscious atoms somehow

or other acquired, in combination, faculties which they did not individually possess, and that 'they grew and they grew,' though not so fast as in the nursery tale; and that throughout long ages they expanded and expanded, till the swelling mass began to DESIRE all kinds of specific shapes and faculties, and that the desire became so intense, that at last it was gratified! Accordingly, one mass having discovered that an eye was desirable for its illumination, the intensity of the desire produced the eye. In like manner the ear was produced. Having reached this stage, the growing mass might readily enough find out the advantages of reason, if indeed reason had not preceded the desire. Anyhow, the mass having desired to possess reason, got it, and thus the accomplished man, the monarch of creation, was produced—accompanied or followed, we suppose, from the development of another set of atoms, by a suitable spouse; but at what particular stage of their several developments, the spouses first met and recognised each other, the philosophers have not explained. While all this was in the course of progress, other atoms, as is suspected of a lower grade, were developing themselves into inferior animals; but our philosophers are not agreed as to whether all creation emerged from one original atom, or whether separate atoms and combinations were necessary, for the production of each of the distinct separate species of living creatures which now inhabit our world. Conveniently enough, however, they find suitable mates for them all, which looks as if the atoms were remarkably intelligent. We wish, however, those philosophers would tell us why similar combinations and developments have now ceased? Why does not new life continue to emerge? Moreover, in consequence of our having got the length of being able to appreciate what is excellent and desirable, why should not we ourselves be still developing in all

imaginable directions. And there might be room for it. Many of us would like to have wings, and why should they not grow *now*, as eyes and ears did once? Such a theory, in the *absence* of an adequate and intelligent GREAT FIRST CAUSE, is only fit for ridicule.

It is not long ago that sceptics pointed to a hazy light in the skies, which they called nebulous matter, and which they assured us would gradually become condensed, and in millions of years become a sun or a world. They did not explain where the particles of matter came from, or how, when condensed, the body could be set in motion, and take its place exactly where it would not disturb the other heavenly bodies. But the huge telescope, which was afterwards made by the Earl of Rosse, revealed that these hazy particles were countless suns made already, separated from each other by incalculable distances, and each the centre of another solar system, only apparently small because of their vast distance; and thus the nebulous theory disappeared as suddenly as did the laughable theory of the philosopher in the fable, who thought he saw a monster in the sun, which turned out to be only a fly in his telescope!

Infidels themselves have latterly become aware that there is something wanting in their theory of creation, and they now introduce what they call *force*, in order to account for the wonderful development. We showed the results of this in our Nineteenth Address. They say that development was the result of *force*. But this does not remove their difficulty a single step, because the questions occur, What was this force? and *where* did it come from? These questions they can no more answer than they can tell where the atoms came from. Moreover, the records of past time do not support their theory either with or without the force.

Reverting to the development theory, we formerly showed you, that if it were true, geology would have supported it. But geology does nothing of the kind. The remains of the earliest men, and of other animals, which lived thousands of years ago, show that the existing races have not advanced anatomically; and the remains of the earliest writings witness, that the existing races have not advanced intellectually. Science is indeed making progress in revealing the works of creation, but it has not discovered how either *atoms*, or *force*, or *life*, came originally into existence. Leaving our bodily frame as at first created, it also leaves our intellectual *power* as at first conferred—capable of cultivation and of acquiring knowledge, no doubt, but not changed in its nature. The literature of Moses and Job, of the Psalms and the Proverbs, of Isaiah and all the Prophets, some of it about four thousand years old, is not surpassed by the noblest of modern writings. We adverted, also, in previous addresses to the fact, that certain appearances in the crust of the earth, which infidels seized on, as indicating that the present condition of the material world required countless millions of ages for its construction, have been so thoroughly exploded by subsequent discoveries, that no candid man now refers to them. Ponder over the subject as you may, you will find that the Bible alone gives a trustworthy narrative regarding creation. Matter can never produce mind; but a divine mind could produce matter. At any rate, you must choose between these two only alternatives. You have no other to choose from, than that either matter *or* mind was the original cause of all things. The philosophers, who are trying to convince us that matter advanced from atoms, and through senseless intermediate forms, till it became apes and baboons, and finally developed into the intellect-

ual man, may as well tell us also that an atom developed itself into a steam-engine, or into a watch, irrespective of their makers; and that iron developed itself through its intermediate stages from the bowels of the earth, till, in its red-hot condition on the anvil, it hammered itself into useful forms. And yet this is substantially the theory by which they would unsettle our faith in revelation. With a coolness and effrontery, however, which excites surprise, some of them admit that they have not *yet* discovered evidence of the truth of their theory; and only say, that by their researches they may discover it. They will never, except from the Bible, be able to tell what produced the atoms—and their combination—and the force—and where it came from—and how life could be produced by all the imaginable combined forces in the universe. But all this was solved by revelation thousands of years ago. In the second chapter of Genesis we are told, *not* that the unconscious dust of the ground formed itself into man, but that ‘The *Lord God formed man* out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.’

Philosophers who, in order to evade the truth of this Bible narrative, tell us that they *have* discovered that matter, without knowing how it was produced, but after it was produced, *does* possess certain inherent ‘*potencies*’ of development, of which they have only as yet an *insufficient* comprehension, and which they are now engaged in more fully tracing out. This is certainly lifting a foot in the dark. Without their efforts we know already that in *certain circumstances* matter *has* received ‘potency,’ both of growth and reproduction. But this does not separate the Creator one step from creation, and only brings us back to the question, who created this ‘potency?’ The assumption that it was *conferred*, irrespective of some

cause or intelligent *agent* who conferred it, is a contradiction in terms. It might as well be asserted that an eight-day clock, which goes for a week without being wound up, goes in consequence of some inherent force or potency in the materials of which it is made. A wondering savage might imagine that the materials of the clock must possess some such inherent potency, of which he has only at present 'an insufficient comprehension,' which he is resolved to search out; but he would only be laughed at. The clockmaker could tell him all about it, and perhaps he would accept the explanation with exemplary docility. In like manner the universe inspires us with wonder; but it is explained by the first chapter of Genesis, that 'GOD SAID let the earth bring forth grass, and the herb *yielding seed*, and the fruit tree *yielding fruit* after his kind . . . and it was so; and GOD SAID let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowls that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven, and GOD CREATED every living thing that moveth . . . after their kind . . . and God saw that it was good, and God blessed them saying, BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY . . . and God created man . . . male and female . . . and God blessed them and said unto them BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY . . . and God said behold I have given you every herb BEARING SEED . . . and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree, bearing seed,' etc. In these verses there is revealed to us the *cause*, whereby matter, in certain circumstances, had potency conferred on it; and it was only such kind of potency as God was pleased to confer—not potency to develop itself into every kind of creature or form, but only each into its own kind.

Let us, only for argument's sake, suppose that a *cause* for creation and its developments, *different* from the cause revealed in the verses now quoted, were alleged to be dis-

covered, that *cause* would just be another *name* for GOD, to whom we desire to ascribe all the glory and the majesty, for all that are in the heavens and the earth are His. The infidel assertion is not advanced by merely showing that matter, in certain circumstances, operates; for even if it could be shown that flowers could become sentient beings, it would simply be God's ordination. The mode of operation is fixed and invariable, and not independent. But the *cause* is separate and distinct from the operation; and unless it can be shown that development is the result of inherent intelligence in matter, and that matter, whether it existed from all eternity or created itself, possessed and exercised intelligent will, infidels are shut up to the necessity of admitting an omnipotent and all-wise first cause, and that *cause* is God. If they will not make this admission, but adhere to their wild assertion, we simply tell them that they assert what they *cannot prove*. Did unconscious matter or blind force adorn our gardens with flowers and our fields with fruits, or did it paint the lily? Does the hawk fly by its wisdom? The presumption is against the infidel argument, and throws on infidels the burden of overcoming it by contrary evidence; *but this* they CANNOT POSSIBLY DO.

They are struggling to get backward to the BEGINNING; but they have only got to atoms, and there they stop. They speak of laws of development, or force and combination; but what is the nature of these laws? or who enacted them? Here they are as ignorant, as they are of the nature or essence of the attraction which keeps the world in its sphere. Yet the laws are orderly, consistent, omnipotent, and inexorable. Only one Being could enact them, and He must necessarily have been above them—the only omnipotent and infinitely wise God.

In passing, we would suggest to sceptics to consider, since God's natural laws are obviously perfect, whether his moral laws may not be equally so; and, if they be equally perfect, are they prepared to be tried for all the violation of them, of which they must be conscious they are guilty?

This brings out the point to which we implore your earnest attention. We may all lawfully investigate the works of creation, in the doing of which the Psalmist took pleasure; but we dare not regard them as the works of any other than the infinite Creator revealed in the Bible. If we do, we commit the sin of withholding the honour which is due to Him. Do not be led away with the idea, that there is *nothing* between the Christian and the infidel but a *word or a name*. Infidels seek for some cause irrespective of our Bible God—and mark what would follow if they succeeded. The *unknown* cause, which they are in quest of, has made no revelation. Consider what would be the result of this tremendous error. One result is proclaimed already by the very high priest of these infidels. He announces that there is no certain evidence of the immortality of the soul, or responsibility to a divine being. Of course, if there is no revelation whatever on these subjects, it must be sought for in nature alone. He further tells us that man, having served his time on earth, 'melts away into the infinite azure of the past,' and that the matter or atom from which he sprang, which was something, melts away into absolutely nothing. But let that pass! Is there no immortal soul? and no responsibility hereafter? Then, as Paul says, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die! We are to pass away like a shadow, are we? Is there nothing but gloom in death? No glory after it? Is our closing day here to know no dawn hereafter? If so, why should our little life be subjected to any moral

restraints? Why may not human passions be allowed to revel in unrestrained indulgence? And when weary of life, why may not the libertine become the suicide? Merciful God! hear our prayers, and save us from such infidelity! We know who Thou art. Thou art the Creator of heaven and earth and all that is therein. Thou hast not left us in a dark and helpless mental chaos like that which existed, when Thy omnipotent voice said, Let there be light! Thou hast revealed to us all that we require to know. Thou art our guide for the present, and our infinite portion for the future. Thou art the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—who is our Redeemer, our Righteousness, and our Judge—through whom we fear not the judgment-day, for the Redeemer has answered for us, and He is our brother and our refuge!

Truly there is no evidence of development, but rather of retrogression, on the part of these modern infidels. Some ancient philosophers, who had not the Bible, were greatly in advance of them, for they hoped that as the soul could *not* be the child of matter, it might have an independent existence, and be the child of immortality. Accept our thanksgivings, O our heavenly Father! for having revealed to us that when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved we have a building of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!

TWENTY-EIGHTH ADDRESS.

There shall come in the last days scoffers.—2 Peter iii. 3.

WE assume that, on the strength of its internal and external evidences, which were formerly brought under your consideration, you have accepted the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God, nevertheless we shall consider—

III.—*Another infidel assertion that the truth of the Bible is incapable of being proved.*

This startling assertion is made by men who say that, though there were a supreme Creator, the presumption is, He would not regard such insignificant creatures as we are, and that no contrary evidence *can* be so strong as to overcome this presumption; which, if true, would mean that it is impossible to prove that the Creator has made any revelation to man whatever. They attempt to vindicate this strange proposition, by asserting what, if well founded, it must come to, that we never can have what is called *certain* assurance of the existence of anything which we cannot see, or feel, or which does not, in some way or other, fall within the range of our actual experience. But this reckless assertion is negated by our experience in almost all the ordinary transactions of daily life. It is on the strength of evidence alone, that the inhabitant of some lonely glen, from which he may never have previously wandered, steps boldly, with the

objects of his love, upon the deck of the vessel about to sail across the Atlantic, in the perfect assurance, on the strength of testimony alone, that it will convey him to the land of promise beyond the seas. In like manner, the Christian, as he approaches the dark river which all of us must cross, feels assured, on the strength of Bible testimony, that there is an eternal home beyond the skies, which, as yet, he sees only by the eye of faith.

Considering it unnecessary to say more under this head, we proceed at once to notice another—

IV.—*Infidel creed founded on the alleged sufficiency of reason alone.*

By this is meant, contrary to all experience, that reason, independently of the Bible or the influences of the Spirit of God, is sufficient to enable man to reach the highest degree of perfection attainable in this world. So thought a learned Asiatic, who once delivered in this country some remarkable addresses on the creed and character of the native Indians. Their creed, as he described it, resembled that of many of our home sceptics. He worshipped reason, and maintained that it was sufficient to enable man to reach, at least, to that degree of perfection which would be acceptable to the supreme Being, if indeed there was such a Being, and a future state, of which he was uncertain. This learned heathen saw no occasion for the atonement, but he accepted the morality of the Bible just as our sceptics accept the morality of Plato or Socrates. He frankly admitted the awkward fact, that, notwithstanding the alleged sufficiency of reason, the heathen, whom the Bible had not reached, were ignorant, superstitious and cruel; and he endeavoured to get quit of the inevitable

inference, from this admission, by asserting that they had *declined* from their ancient civilisation and morality—an assertion not very creditable to reason, and inconsistent with much reliable early history.

Such are specimens of the infidelity which you will meet with in the world. But do not be disturbed by the idea, that it is held by the generality of educated men. The contrary is the fact. Christianity has hosts of advocates, among the most learned and distinguished men, trained to weigh evidence, who, as well as men of the humblest attainments, have accepted the Bible as true, and have felt its power. The enemies of the Gospel in this country are, after all, a small minority, more obtrusive than convincing—more noisy than numerous. They are mostly composed of men who make literature a profession, writers in magazines and reviews, and lecturers, who insinuate doubts, under the cover of free discussion, acceptable to lovers of novelty. Men cannot be happy whose futurity is dark. St Paul himself tells us, that such a state of mind would have rendered him ‘of all men the most miserable.’ Perhaps they think that certain misgivings of their own would be lessened if they were shared by others. But however this may be, we owe it to ourselves to avoid the counsel of the ungodly.

We have hitherto spoken of the extremes of error on the side of scepticism, we now turn to the opposite extreme, on the side of—

V.—*Superstition.*

About a hundred years ago there was scarcely a Roman Catholic school in Great Britain; but now Roman Catholic schools and churches are numerous, and they have planted colleges in different parts of the country. Mate-

rialist sceptics are to blame for this ; because, as men naturally shrink from the idea that their origin and destiny are such as materialists fancy, some run into the opposite and less repulsive extreme of superstition. The papist shrinks from the sceptic, while the sceptic laughs at the papist. It is really amazing to observe how far superstition can go. We feel it to be quite sufficient to name some of the doctrines in which Roman Catholics believe, in order to secure their rejection. They believe, to some extent, in the mediation of a feeble woman, if not in preference to, at least as supplementary of the intercession of the Son of God, though the Bible says that there is no mediator but Jesus Christ ; they believe in the forgiveness of sins by an arrogant and corrupt priesthood, and in the efficacy of the disgusting confessional, though the Bible says that none can forgive sins but God ; they believe that a sinful fellow-creature, like themselves, is the infallible head of Christ's blood-bought Church, though the Bible recognises only the headship of Christ ; they believe in plenary indulgences, and in the sufficiency of dispensations for money, though the Bible declares that those who have named the name of Jesus *must* depart from all iniquity ; they believe that, in the hands of priests, bread and wine are changed into the real body and blood of Christ, though the priests would not partake of these elements if they discovered that they were poisoned ; they believe that a falsehood may be told to avert some imagined greater evil—that sins may be cleared away in purgatory,—and that purgatory may be abridged at the intercession of the priests, and immunity therefrom may be purchased with money ; they believe in the virtue of relics, though those collected exceed by thousands of times the size of the originals ; and more deplorably than all, they believe that, at the close of the most irreligious life they are safe, provided they

receive absolution from a priest, though the Bible declares that at the last day each individual shall be judged in righteousness. These and such like doctrines require only to be stated to be rejected by all who read and believe the Bible.

The Roman Catholic Church did not adopt these dogmas all at once. Her grossest errors grew out of originally slight, and apparently harmless, deviations from the Word of God, some of them even adopted under the mistaken idea of defending the truth. A source of the errors which have crept into the Roman Catholic Church is the admission of doctrines, on the supposed authority of the early fathers and churches, received after the lapse of many centuries, through the uncertain medium of mere tradition. When tradition is once admitted, it is impossible to know when to reject it, or where to draw the line between what is false and what is true. The only safety, therefore, lies in rejecting it altogether, and in our adhering strictly to the written Word of God as the only rule to direct us, remembering that Paul said, if any man teach any other than the apostolic doctrines, 'let him be accursed.' The Roman priesthood knew well how entirely the Bible stood in the way of their devices, and therefore they allowed it to remain in a language unknown to the common people, and long prohibited it to be read when translated. The period while this lasted is known by the appropriate name of the 'dark ages,' during which the fairest portions of Europe were enslaved; but the Reformation placed the translated Bible in the hands of the laity in their vernacular tongue, and then the clouds of ignorance were dispelled, and Scotland became God-fearing and intelligent. This Bible is as potent as ever. Many false lights have flashed and faded, but its light, in spite of bitter and persistent efforts to obscure it, con-

tinues to increase and to spread civilization throughout the world. It is only the Word of the Lord which endureth for ever.

The result of the Roman Catholic errors is to place vast power in the hands of the priesthood, which has too often been exercised for selfish and political ends, while it debases the minds of their votaries. These votaries too often believe that they are relieved from thinking and acting in matters of faith, in the sight of God. They imagine that the priests think for them. The convert, or rather *pervert*, to Rome, must give up the liberty of conscience ; and it is humbling to think of such a degraded result as that to which this leads ; such as that of a British nobleman walking barefooted up and down the stairs of a convent, till a priest was satisfied that he was subdued into obedience to his Church, forgetting that Christ said, 'Call no man master.'

There are other evil influences to which young men are exposed, some of which are not easily defined, and yet are very dangerous. In unavoidably mixing in general society, if religion be referred to, you may meet with the quiet sarcastic sneer, or the contemptuous pitying smile, or the supercilious affectation of superior wisdom, on the part of men who have freed themselves from what they call stereotyped beliefs. All this it may be difficult to bear. It is a species, and often a bitter species, of persecution. But be *not ashamed of the gospel of Christ*. Call to your recollection who are those of whom Christ promises at the last not to be ashamed. Do not forget that you are forewarned by the Apostle Peter, that 'there shall come in the last days scoffers.' Among lovers of change in our days there are many scoffers. But stand fast, and remember the promised crown. Remember the Apostle Paul's earnest pleading with Timothy.

‘ When I have err’d and gone astray,
Afar from Thine and wisdom’s way,
And see no glimmering guiding ray,
Still, Saviour, plead for me.

‘ When Satan, by my sins made bold,
Strives from Thy cross to loose my hold,
Then, with Thy pitying arms enfold,
And plead, Oh plead for me.’

We meant to have said a few words on the best means of counteracting evil influences, and to have closed with the personal question, Have we accepted the Bible in sincere and simple-hearted faith? But this must be reserved for a future opportunity.

TWENTY-NINTH ADDRESS.

FAITH.

Without Faith it is impossible to please God.—Heb. xi. 6.

WE come to consider how evil influences, such as those referred to in our last address, may be averted.

A subordinate mean is the selection of Christian companions. As we have not enlarged on the evils of bad company, we shall not stay to point out the advantages of good. They are sufficiently obvious.

We proceed to invite you to have *faith* in God.

The responsibility laid on us who enjoy the privilege of the Bible is vast. The canon of Scripture is now complete. We possess the concluded and conclusive evidences of its inspiration. We have it, in its countless prophecies, fulfilled most completely in their minutest details, after long succeeding ages, during which the world was being prepared for the appearance of the Messiah. Such evidence would have been wanting if He had appeared immediately after the fall. All this is corroborated by well vouched and stupendous miracles, by the sublime morality of the Bible, and by its singular adaptation to the necessities of all of us, however varied these may be. The prayerful Bible-reading student soon feels its power. Have we, then, not theoretically, but *really*, accepted the Bible as the inspired Word of God? Do we believe it? Are we trusting to the Saviour whom it reveals? Each one of us is, *at this moment*, in a state

either of safety or of danger. There must be *progress* in the Christian journey, when it is once begun ; but it is not of that which we now speak. Our present question is, Have we begun the Christian journey, or have we not? Our condition by nature requires to be changed. Are we believers in Christ, or are we not? Are we at this moment reconciled to God, or are we not? We cannot be both travelling to glory and to perdition. A man cannot be naturally dead and alive, neither can he be spiritually dead and alive. There is but one of two states in which we can be *now* ; and if we were suddenly called from this world, there is but one of two states on which we shall then enter. That state, whichever it be, is eternally unchangeable. We repeat, therefore, What is our condition at this moment? To believe in Christ as our Redeemer is our present duty, and our only safety. The Philippian jailer believed, and was immediately saved. The thief on the cross believed, and was immediately pardoned, and was that day with Christ in Paradise. ‘Go in peace, thy faith hath saved thee,’ were the gracious words which invariably flowed from the lips of Christ in the days of His flesh to the believing suppliant.

Have we, then, *belief* or *faith* in the revealed Word of God? There is no real difficulty in understanding this question. No one can read the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews without understanding what faith is. In that chapter faith is illustrated by remarkable examples. In all of them it was an operating principle, followed by implicit obedience. Faith, followed by practical results, does not differ from that faith which we meet with in the ordinary business of life. The merchant trusts the buyer in the faith of receiving payment. The child, who throws away paltry toys on his father’s assurance that if he do so he will get better toys, evinces his belief in his father’s word by

thus throwing his toys away. A child once leapt from the window of a burning house, on the assurance that his father would catch him in his arms—he had faith—leapt—and was saved. Alexander the Great received a letter warning him that his physician had been bribed to poison him. Next day the physician entered his tent with medicine, on which Alexander swallowed the draught without evincing any suspicion, and only *then* handed the letter to his physician. Alexander thus proved his belief in the physician's innocence.

Faith, or belief in the Word of God, does not, in its nature, differ from the faith displayed in these instances. If real, it must lead to practical results. Noah, warned of God, believed; and, acting on his belief, prepared the ark for the saving of himself and his household.

If, on a journey in the dark, you dreaded that you were approaching a precipice, you would stop. If doubtful as to the right road, you would inquire.

It was from acting on belief that Abraham procured for himself the honour of being called the Father of the Faithful. If we thoroughly believe God's Word, that we can only be saved through Christ, we are compelled to flee to Christ. The blessings of the covenant of grace, which are freely offered, are accepted by faith—not by our works of righteousness, but according to the mercy of God. Without faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. xi. 6. It is well expressed in the Shorter Catechism, that 'Faith is a saving grace, whereby we receive, and rest upon Christ as He is offered to us in the gospel.' They who '*believe* on His name' become the sons of God, John i. 12. Faith thus constitutes the basis, and by its results the whole, of religion. It transforms the sinner into a saint, the child of wrath into an heir of glory. The son who was dead is alive again, and he who was lost is found.

In the parable of the marriage feast, the guests were

required, not merely to accept the invitation, but to *put off* their own worthless garments, and to *put on* the robes provided for them. Here we have an illustration of faith in the acceptance of the invitation, and the putting on of the marriage robe.

Let us answer more particularly the question, *What are we to believe?*

The Bible tells us that, though God loves the sinner, He will by no means clear the impenitent—that if we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us—that His law is holy—that we have violated it—that we cannot deliver ourselves from its curse, but that God thought of us in mercy—that Christ is offered, and must be accepted, as our Redeemer and our righteousness; and that the Holy Spirit is willing to renew and reconcile us to God and prepare us for heaven.

In regard to all this, we are treated as rational beings. God does not force our belief. He desires the willing homage of our affections and obedience, as the result of intelligent belief.

No doubt many of the truths which God requires us to believe are above the reach of unaided reason. They can only be known by being revealed to us; but to withhold our belief from them, if accompanied by the requisite evidences, is to dishonour God. The plan of redemption, the existence and influences of the Holy Spirit, life everlasting, and the joys of heaven, would all have remained unknown, if they had not been expressly revealed. Without faith in these wonderful truths there can be no gratitude or love to God, no repentance, no stimulus to holiness, no striving after advancement in conformity to God's will, no interest to acquire a fitness for admission into the kingdom above, no motive for striving to please God. Without faith, it is impossible to please God.

The fundamental truths of the Bible are quite in accordance with reason, and should therefore be the more readily believed. Take, for example, the declared fact that the inclinations of our hearts are evil. We know this experimentally to be true, and reason tells us that unless we feel that there really is such 'a law in our members' warring against us, we will never ask, like Paul, who will deliver us from the body of this death? Rom. vii. 23, 24. *Unless* we have discovered and believed that we are spiritually 'poor and naked,' Rev. iii. 17, we will never seek for the riches and the righteousness which Christ has provided; and *unless* we feel assured how much we owe to God as the author of salvation, He will never be the object of our love. How then can it be possible, without faith, to please God?

Faith thus becomes an essential condition of our salvation. God has expressly told us that 'whosoever believeth not, shall be condemned,' John iii. 16, 18, 36. The lives of those who were in the ship with Paul were promised, on the condition of their believing, and consequently abiding in it; and when some thought of adopting other means of safety, Paul said to the centurion, 'Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.' Moreover, our belief must be in *exact conformity* with what God requires; no equivalent belief will be accepted. When God, through Elisha, commanded Naaman the leper to wash seven times in the Jordan, Naaman at first proposed to go to one of two rivers, which were 'better than all the waters of Israel;' but his servant suggested that the Prophet's command should be obeyed as given; he then obeyed, washed in the Jordan, and was cured.

Belief in the Word of God is not only necessary to impel us to flee to Christ, but it is an act of homage

on our part to God. It has pleased God to require faith, and it becomes efficacious, because He has required it. By faith a great practical and moral result is accomplished in us. The fear of detection and punishment in this world prevents many men from telling a lie, or cheating or stealing, who yet in their hearts would be willing to commit such crimes, provided they were quite sure of being undiscovered by their fellow-men. But a real belief in the omniscience of God, and the offensiveness of such crimes, prevents us from committing them, irrespective of the fear of detection in this world.

Such are the fruits of faith. It cannot be inoperative. Like living seed in good soil, it must grow. Its growth may at first be small—less than the least of all seeds; but if it be living, it will ‘shoot out great branches.’ Two men may be externally irreproachable; but the one avoids licentiousness, because, and for no other reason than that indulgence would injure him in society. There is no growth in this case. The other man once loved the same vice, but he now believes that it is offensive to God, and, therefore, thinking nothing at all about society, he turns from it, and grows in conformity with the will of God. The external appearances of these two men are identical; but before God there is an essential difference. The one may, indeed, thank God that he is not like a wicked publican; the other secretly prays, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner.’ The one is decent, without thinking of God, while his heart may be growing hard as adamant; the other is also decent, but he is striving more and more to please God. To the aid of the latter, the Spirit of God comes, and his path is the path of the just; he is reconciled to God. His faith has saved him. Such are the results of faith.

If we truly believe that all who are far from God shall

perish, it will impel us to call on Him while He is near. If we really believe that the wages of sin is death, we will desire the gift of God, which is eternal life, Rom. iv. 23. There cannot be any real belief which leads to no real result. The most inveterate drunkard, who *believed* that the cup he was about to quaff, was poisoned, would dash it to the ground.

We should love God, if we believe He first loved us. This is the basis of every other change. Peace is now obtained, John xiv. 27 ; xvi. 37. The hope of eternal glory is kindled within us, 2 Peter iii. 11, 14 ; while, from the outpouring of a grateful heart, good works abound, Gal. v. 22 ; not as the *ground* of hope, but as the *result* or fruit of faith. I will shew thee, says James, ii. 18, my faith by my works.

But some may say, If I am not CONVINCED, *how can I believe ?*

We answer, undoubtedly you cannot. But before any man can truly assert that he *cannot* believe, he must be sure he has anxiously, laboriously, and perseveringly, and with prayer for the promised aid of the Holy Spirit, examined both the contents of the Bible and the evidences on which they rest. If he cannot say this, he can only expect to be condemned, if not for wilful rejection, at least for his culpable ignorance or indifference, which are equally reprehensible. If a son, in a distant country, received a letter from his father, would he not be very culpable if he neither satisfied himself of its authenticity, nor examined its contents, and thus disregarded or neglected a message from his father ? It will afford no alleviation of suffering in a lost eternity for any of its victims to plead that they treated the Bible as such a careless son treated his father's letter ; or, that they were too much engrossed with the business or the pleasures of this life

to regard a message from heaven. The neglect is culpable and punishable. On this same principle the laws of our country are enforced. Ignorance is no defence for any violation of them. God is specially angry with those who will *not consider* His message, *Psa. l. 22.* Let the fear of this drive all of us to Christ, with the prayer, 'Help, Lord, lest we perish!' If so, Christ will say, peace; and there shall be a great calm. He will pour heaven's light into us, and bless us with a peace which the world cannot take away.

The criminality of culpable neglect is aggravated by the consideration that God has recognised the reasonableness that His messages should be accompanied with evidence of their truth, and *has given that evidence.* When He sent Moses with a message to the Egyptians, God, knowing that without evidence they could not be expected to believe, *Exod. iv. 5,* caused the rod in the hand of Moses to become a serpent, that they might 'believe that God hath appeared unto thee;' and other miraculous evidences were given, before the measure of Pharaoh's guilt was filled up. The sign in the controversy as to whether God or Baal was the true God, was the descent of fire from heaven, kindling the sacrifice on Elijah's altar. The evidences of the truth of the Bible are complete, and within our reach. 'O that they were wise,' saith God, and 'that they would consider!' *Deut. xxxii. 29.* Christ said, 'If I do not the works of my Father, believe Me not; but *if I do*, believe the works,' *John x. 37, 38.*

The duty of investigating the evidence of what affects our interests in the business of ordinary life is never disputed, nor unwillingly gone about. Were we to receive any last will in our favour, we would not be slow to examine its authenticity and contents; and though it were bulky, we would spare no labour till we understood it.

We are surely bound to treat the Bible with equal consideration, seeing it professes to be our charter to an eternal inheritance. 'What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall He teach the way that he shall choose,' *Psa. xxv. 12.* 'The Holy Ghost shall teach you all things,' *John xiv. 26.* Therefore, if any man be lost, it will be because he would 'not come,' nor 'hear, that his soul might live,' *Isa. lv. 3.*

The duty of searching the Scriptures is pressed upon us again and again most urgently in the Bible. 'Pray without ceasing,' is commanded in *1 Thess. v. 17*; and in the *119th Psalm*, in which there are *176* verses, it so happens that we are *170* times, that is about once in each verse, directly or by implication, reminded of the duty of searching into, and endeavouring to understand, the Word of God. Is this reiteration without meaning? And in *Psa. l. 22*, it is said, '*Consider* this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.'

But remember, *there is no merit in believing.*

If, through faith—which, in answer to prayer, is the gift of God, *Eph. ii. 8*—light has entered into our hearts, we have no more merit than the man has, who opens the window when he rises in the morning to let in the light of day. In believing, we have as much merit as that man has—no more.

If, through faith, we have caught hold of Christ as the only hope set before us in the gospel, we have as much merit as the drowning man has, who clutches the rope which is thrown out to save him—no more.

If God accept the death of Christ as the atonement for our sins, we have as much merit as the debtor who pleads that he has had his debts paid by another—no more.

If we are made heirs of an inheritance in heaven, in

consequence of Christ having purchased it for us, we have as much merit as the man who gets an estate by the free will or disposition of another—no more.

If we are clothed in the robes of Christ's righteousness, we have as much merit as the beggar who is clothed by the bounty of another—no more.

If our sins are pardoned, we have as much merit as the malefactor on whom the sovereign confers a free and unmerited pardon—no more.

In such circumstances, we never can be too grateful or too humble. 'By the deeds of the law no man can be justified,' Rom. iii. 20. On the contrary, 'we are justified *freely* by *grace*, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,' ver. 24. 'Where is boasting, then? It is excluded, ver. 27. And yet, in the sense which we have tried to explain, it is truly said of the believer, 'Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.'

In conclusion, let it be remembered that those who finally perish will not be able to urge the wretched plea, that they were born doomed ones who could *not* possibly believe. The all-wise and loving God, who knows the nature of the hearts which He made, did not leave His message of mercy unsupported by the evidence necessary to produce conviction in the mind of any man who chose earnestly to inquire. The consciousness of this will add fearful power to the awakened conscience. The miseries of the finally lost will be aggravated beyond comparison by their recollection, that so far from God having doomed them from their birth to destruction, his urgent language to them was, 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die?' Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

THIRTIETH ADDRESS.

THE CLOSE OF LIFE.

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.—Psalm xxxvii. 37.

WE now propose to give some illustrations which have fallen under our personal notice, of the power of faith in the gospel to sustain believers in the hour of death, promising only that at such a time it cannot be expected to be uniform. At the approach of dissolution much depends on our natural constitution, on the strength of earthly ties, and on the degree of prostration produced by physical causes,—hence great differences must occur. Some Christians may exhibit mental depression, while others who have been through life subject to bondage from the fear of death, enjoy unexpected serenity. BUNYAN, who, in his marvellous allegory, represented *Christian*, from whose back, at the sight of the cross, the burden of sin instantly fell,—as valiantly overcoming Apollyon, and being finally welcomed into the celestial city, represented him also, when he entered the river over which there is no bridge, as being ‘much stunned,’ and crying out, ‘I sink in deep waters,’ and being in ‘horror of mind’ from ‘the troublesome thoughts of sin, so that in a great measure he lost his senses;’ while others in his allegory, who, throughout the journey, were weak and timid, found the dark waters not so deep nor so appalling as they feared, and went through singing, ‘O death where is thy sting,

and seeing, by the eye of faith, angels waiting to carry them into the presence of the great King. On the other hand, the contrast is sometimes met with, of careless men having 'no bands in their death—their strength is firm—they are not troubled as other men.' We must not therefore lay much stress on the state of mind at *the moment* when men are called hence. The great question is not so much how a man dies, as how he lived !

The end, however, of the upright is peace ; and those who walk with Christ through life will, after death, dwell in the house of the Lord for ever ; while those who put off repentance till the dying hour, may find conscience awakened when too late, and die with a sad prospect before them, and the frightful words 'for ever and ever' ringing in their ears. We were not surprised to read that in such a case a nurse, on leaving an infidel's deathbed, was so horrified, that she declared she never, with her knowledge, would wait on a dying infidel again.

Quitting these remarks, we shall now give, not pictures of imagination, but two instances from *notes written at the time*, of the power of faith in the gospel sustaining two believers in the hour of death : the one aged, the other young. The first was a lady who, for a long time, suffered much bodily pain, which was known to her friends chiefly from violent perspiration protruding through her flushed countenance, for she never complained. Gratefully, she often said, 'My children have done all for my body, and my Saviour has done all for my soul.' She asked the medical men to tell her the worst of her case. 'I am prepared for it ; my most difficult struggle was to part from my children, but that struggle is over, and you must tell me the truth ;' and accordingly it was communicated to her ; and down to the last moment she did not quail. She used to say, 'What could I do, lying on this bed,

to save myself? I would eternally perish if anything were left for me to do; but Jesus has done all for me. I feel I have spent a useless life, and yet I am just as if wrapped up in a Saviour's love as in a mantle. Oh, the love of Christ, it passeth knowledge!' On one occasion she said, 'What if I am deceiving myself? I sometimes fear that after all I have not taken hold of Christ.' On this it was suggested, that even that fear showed a *desire* which God would not disappoint; and she replied, 'O yes, my desire is to be found in Christ, not having my own righteousness;' and she quoted the words, 'Fear not; I the Lord am thy husband! Oh, to think of the Creator of all the ends of the earth talking in that way to a sinful creature! And yet the Son of God became an infant of days that He might be the Saviour of the world. He is all my trust!' She was a great reader of the Bible. On her son beginning to quote to her the verse, 'My soul waiteth for God,' *she* instantly proceeded, 'from Him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation. I shall not be greatly moved.' On a friend quoting the words, 'O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee;' she immediately went on, 'my soul thirsteth for Thee; my soul longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land.' Once more, the friend said, 'Behold, what manner of love;' but he had no time to proceed farther, for she quoted the verse on to the words, '*we shall see Him as He is,*' adding, from the Psalms, 'the Lord is my rock and my fortress; the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.' These are only a few examples. On her pain becoming very severe, she said it was a great consolation to believe that it was measured out by an unerring God for some wise purpose.

Men of powerful intellect may smile at this who may perhaps tremble at the approach of the last enemy. This

poor feeble woman, crushed to the earth with pain, looked death calmly in the face, and spoke of approaching victory. At length she thought her last hour was come, and said, 'I hear my Saviour calling.' She then appeared to be rapidly sinking, but she rallied, saying, 'I know I have given you all a sad fright, but we must wait our Saviour's time.' Soon after she said 'I have nothing more to do,' and in a little, after repeating slowly and distinctly these four lines—

‘There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins ;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains,’

her spirit fled. This was the case of an aged Christian—not an instance of a deathbed conversion.

We now give an account of the death of a young man who died before he finished his twentieth year, whose early life was very bright. His temper, under the influence of the gospel, was of inexpressible sweetness. We may be forgiven for saying that he seemed to reflect the spirit of his Saviour, as the dewdrop reflects the beauties of the sun. This was brought out in bright relief by the dark shading of a long illness. Love and gratitude, brighter than diamond rays, constantly shone in his very eyes, and bound his relatives to him by a golden chain. They watched him to his last hour with a solicitude which wealth could not purchase. When there was too much reason to fear that his health was irretrievably gone, he was left on a Sacramental Sabbath at home, his friends thinking him unable to accompany them to church ; but about mid-day he was unexpectedly observed, with a pale and languid countenance, sitting at the communion-table. He returned home done with life, which had hitherto

been very promising, for if he had lived he was about to enter as a partner into a lucrative profession. But of that he calmly took leave. Soon afterwards he said he was afraid he had never sufficiently felt contrition for sin. Those who know not the plague of a depraved heart, and trust in a fancied guileless life, may smile at this; but piety, like a golden thread, had been interwoven with his brief existence. He well knew that in the presence of a holy God no flesh living can be justified. His disease continued to make progress, and though he knew that he was dying, he remained perfectly calm. He said he regarded an appearance before the righteous Judge of all the earth as a very solemn thing; and that he had no righteousness in himself to plead, but he rested unreservedly on the merits of the Saviour. This young man heard the voice of Him who saith, 'When thou passeth through the waters I will be with thee.' In Christ he found all that his never-dying soul required—precious blood to cleanse him—precious righteousness to cover him—precious strength to sustain him—and a precious and all-prevailing advocate at the right hand of the Majesty on high. On one occasion a dark cloud gathered for a little over him, and he said he was afraid he had been too easily satisfied with trusting in Christ, and that it seemed too easy a way of getting to heaven; but, after a pause, he exclaimed, 'O yes, what a beautiful robe is Christ's righteousness.' On another occasion he said, 'I sometimes fear I have been too easily satisfied with leaving all to Christ, and that I have not loved my God as I ought;' but he then quoted Christ's words, 'I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.' 'I believe, and think I am quite safe.'

Soon after he suffered much from violent perspiration, and then suspecting himself to be sinking, he said, 'Oh !

can this be death?' A friend answered, 'If you should now be called to enter the dark valley, I am sure you have not your Saviour to seek.' He replied, 'O no! my hope is in Jesus.' In a little after he said, 'If this be death, I think I am safe!' and, after lying quiet a few moments, he exclaimed, 'In Christ, *I am safe.*' The 14th chapter of John was then read to him, and he remarked on it—'Ah, yes! the Comforter goes down into the man, and purifies his thoughts and actions.' A little while afterwards the 21st chapter of the Revelation being read to him, brightening hopes beamed through his smiling eyes as he repeated the words—'I saw a new heaven, and a new earth,' etc. 'Oh, delightful!' On the afternoon of his last Sabbath he said, 'Do read to me that beautiful little parable of the Pharisee and the Publican.' It was accordingly done, and he then talked of the soothing influence which it had upon his mind, saying, 'He loved the parable because he found that the prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner," was a very appropriate one.'

He often repeated the well-known hymn—

'Other refuge have I none ;
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee ;
Leave, ah ! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me.

'All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring ;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.'

At length the hour of death arrived, and at that solemn period he said, 'What a comfort!—I feel it now—that I found my Saviour in my day of health, for I do not think

I could have been able to seek Him now.' And he added, earnestly and firmly, 'I believe Christ will never leave nor forsake me. Ah, yes! my hope is fixed on Christ. He will not forsake me. I am sure He will not.' As life was ebbing away, one hanging over his dying bed endeavoured to repeat the concluding verses of the 8th chapter of the Romans, but, misquoting them, he seemed to put forth all his remaining strength to correct him, and repeated the verses himself—not once, nor twice, but *three* times over—'Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' Infidelity cannot match such a scene. The last enemy could not disturb it. The ghastly king was vanquished. He keeps his sting for those who know not Christ. In this dying chamber Christ's heel was on the tyrant's neck.

Soon after, this youthful saint called all the members of his family by turns to his bedside, and to each he said 'Good-by—good-by.' One of them at the moment was uncertain whether his mind might not have been wandering, and to ascertain it, he said, 'Where are you going? you are in your bed.' Feeble as his bodily frame then was, he dispelled all doubts by replying, 'I am going to my Father's house, where there are many mansions.' We cannot realise his feelings at that moment. He shed no tear. He complained of no suffering. He evinced no terror. He sat up in bed the very picture of calm and confiding solemnity, waiting for the last summons. After a short pause, he said, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' He then became unable to speak; yet God's purposes were not finished. The quietness of the dying chamber was broken by one saying that he hoped

he 'still felt that he had peace with God, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ;' whereupon, being unable to speak, his hand was observed to move, as if in writing, and a pencil being put into it, he wrote on a piece of paper, quite legibly, the words, 'ALL RIGHT.' It is a little sentence, but, at that moment, of vast import. It answered many a prayer. What a testimony to the faithfulness of God—to the presence and love of Christ—and to the power and preciousness of religion—is left in that 'all right !' It is worth a thousand sermons. It was a dying hand putting to its seal that God is true.

'Sweet is the scene when Christians die,
When sinks a pious soul to rest ;
How mildly beams the closing eye !
How gently heaves th' expiring breast !
So fades a summer cloud away ;
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er ;
So gently shuts the eye of day ;
So dies the wave along the shore.'

No man lives or dies for himself alone. May the record of the death of humble Christians be not lost on us.

We will not make any comment on these narratives. You can easily do so for yourselves ; but as painters sometimes introduce dark shades into their pictures for the purpose of bringing out their beauties by contrast, into bright relief, we will narrate the deplorable deathbed scene of a profligate, as given by Dr Young. The doctor says, that as he endeavoured to direct this individual's attention to the Saviour, he exclaimed, 'Name not that name to me, it wounds me !' Think of the blessedness of heaven, said Dr Young. 'So much the worse—it is lost,' replied the profligate. Whereupon the doctor proposed to pray—'Pray who can ! (said the dying man). I never prayed

—I cannot pray—I need not pray—God only can inflict what I now feel—there is no hope ! I would bless heaven for the martyr's flames. My principles have poisoned my son ; my conduct has beggared him. My cruelty has murdered my wife, and there is yet another hell. Welcome, if it could hide me from an angry God !' And, thus speaking, his spirit fled.

. . . . Conscience !
What art thou ? thou tremendous power,
Which dost inherit us without our leave,
And art within ourselves another self—
A monster self—that loves to domineer,
And treats alike the monarch and the slave !

AFTER DEATH.

There are, however, it must be admitted, many godless men, who die without feeling, or at least without expressing, any remorse on account of their sinful lives ; in whose death, to quote the Psalmist's words, 'there are no bands.' Such men may have maintained an exemplary character, and been distinguished by success in every pursuit to which they devoted themselves ; and many of their pursuits may have been praiseworthy ; but having lost sight of what should ever be the paramount object of human life, they are, at its close, in the melancholy position of having to bid adieu for ever to all the objects at which they grasped, and of having missed the pearl of great price, of which death could not have deprived them. Nevertheless, through disease or stupor, or the hardening influence of infidelity, they *may* display no remorse, and feel no fear ; and, though dying as a fool dies, appear only to close what an unthinking world calls a successful, perhaps a brilliant, career. But what about the moment

after death? Infinitely happier is the man who, unnoticed by a thoughtless world, toiled wearily under affliction and sorrow, and yet could thank God for a crust of bread, and who at length dying, though it may be unheeded, on a bed of straw, sees, like the martyr Stephen, the heavens open, and, by the eye of faith, gets a glimpse of the reconciled countenance of his God and Father. Such a man has chosen the good part. The man in the case first alluded to had on earth his good things, and died like a stoic ; but do not, from such an instance, think lightly of sin, or give way to infidelity, for after death comes the judgment, and then the former having, in the words of the parable, received on earth his good things, is then tormented, and the latter, who had received evil things, is comforted.

In conclusion, the believer in Christ is assured that to be 'absent from the body' is to be 'present with the Lord,' 2 Cor. v. 8, 'which is far better,' Phil. i. 23. Blessed be God, that He announced Himself, through Christ, as 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,' very many ages after they had died ; and in allusion to that statement Jesus said, God 'is not the God of the dead, but the God of the LIVING,' Mark xii. 27. The redeemed 'spirit returns to God who gave it,' Eccles. xii. 7. It enters the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and joins an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, Hebrews xii. 22-25. What precious prospects ! No wonder that an inspired apostle exclaimed, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

'The spirit shall return to Him
That gave its heavenly spark ;

Yet think not sun, it shall be dim
When thou thyself art dark !
' No, it shall live again, and shine
In bliss unknown to beams like thine,
By Him recalled to breath,
Who captive led captivity,
Who robb'd the grave of victory,
And took the sting from death !'

Our addresses are nearly closed. We may not, or rather, we shall not, all meet in another session again. Our parting question is the serious personal one, are we converted to God ? If we are, and eternity depends on the answer, the consciousness of it will be found in our growing resemblance to the Saviour. It is here while we live that *progress* is to be found. The progress may be slow—alas, too slow ! sinfully slow ! It may be slow, like the growth of an infant, but it must be as real ; and we will discover whether it be real, if we compare our state of mind *now* with what it was at some previous period. If the progress be real, it will become perceptible ; and it will go on till we can say, ' I know in whom I have believed,' and with the erring Peter, ' Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee.'

But do not be disheartened if the progress be found not only to have been slow, but that it has not been regularly onward. Evils partially subdued often reappear, and when this is the case, it is an evidence of the weakness of faith, which should fill us with renewed repentance ; but remember that a sinning and a repenting life is a wretched one. The young Christian, in the first blaze of his zeal, may think that he cannot be required to do too much, and then he is grieved to find how little he can do. The truth is, while here Christian life is a constant struggle

against evil, but it is a struggle in which the Christian must steadily persist. We *must* overcome sin, and therefore we should be looking constantly for the promised aid of the Holy Spirit. We have every encouragement to maintain the struggle. We have the best model in Christ, the best promises in the Bible; the most glorious prospect to cheer us, a divine Saviour and brother on high to intercede for us. Thus cheered we should go forward on our Christian journey, strong in the Lord, and confident of a glorious termination. Bless the Lord, O our souls; and all that is within us, bless the Lord, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all our iniquities; who healeth all our diseases; who redeemeth our lives from destruction; who crowneth us with loving-kindness and tender mercies; and who, when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, will receive us into an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. It is not the sceptic who can say this—it is not the doubter—it is not the unbeliever—it is not the self-righteous. It is the humble and grateful believer in the efficacy of the blood of the Redeemer.

Once more we repeat—search and believe, watch, pray, and join the ranks of Christian soldiers in the Church of Christ. None who do so will be left out of heaven. God hath said it; and the everlasting hills may be removed, but His word will not fail. Remember the example of Jacob, who said, ‘I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me.’

‘Lord, I cannot let Thee go
Till a blessing Thou bestow.
No! I must maintain my hold;
’Tis Thy *promise* makes me bold.
I can no denial take,
When I plead for Jesus’ sake.’

Thanks be to God, who has *called* us, from being enemies to be reconciled to Him ; from being aliens, to be heirs—from being lost, to be saved. It is, indeed, a *high* calling. It will never be recalled. It is a *free* call, 'why will ye die?' But it is not an unconditional call. We must put off our own filthy rags, put on the wedding garment, and become a peculiar people. If we are habitually striving to do so we shall enjoy peace now and glory hereafter. *May God bless you all !*

And now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory—to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. AMEN.

At next meeting we propose to give some illustrations of what is meant by the overruling providence of God.

THIRTY-FIRST ADDRESS.

ANECDOTES

WHICH MAY ILLUSTRATE WHAT IS MEANT BY THE OVER-
RULING PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

Consider the ravens—God feedeth them.—Luke xii. 24.
The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof
is of the Lord.—Prov. xvi. 33.

You find many such instances in the Bible. We shall take them, however, from *other* sources, so numerous that we cannot regard them as being all accidental—premising only that they uniformly leave man's responsibility untouched.

I. It was the extension of the Roman Empire, before the birth of Christ, which opened the means of communication with many different nations, and thereby afforded singular facilities for the spread of the gospel. May not this have been the purpose of God, in permitting the extraordinary extension of the Roman Empire?

II. At the time of Christ's appearance, almost all the world was at peace, so that it was called the pacific age.

III. At that time different nations had gods many. The Greeks and Romans were not unwilling to hear about a new God. It was only when Christ's religion denounced immorality and idol-worship that persecution began; but by that time the Christians, though persecuted, were too numerous to be extirpated, and those who fled, published the gospel wherever they went.

IV. CHRIST appointed His religion to be proclaimed by twelve humble men ; and they successfully executed their high commission, however hopeless it at first seemed. But then, under God, the twelve timid and mostly unlearned men suddenly became linguists, brave and persevering, and we know the result. Wherever civilization existed, there appeared also the religion of Christ. The persecutions of Nero, and Domitian, and other Roman Emperors, wonderfully accelerated *that* result.

V. The final destruction of Jerusalem, after God's purposes with it were accomplished, and, as foretold by Christ, also contributed to the same end.

VI. In the second century after Christ, persecution was stayed, and then, with wonderful elasticity, the gospel spread in the East, in France, Spain, Germany, and Britain ; and, though it had afterwards to encounter fierce persecution, it was by *that* time indestructible.

VII. A Roman army, surrounded by enemies in a parched desert, were reduced to absolute despair from want of water. The Christian soldiers in its ranks united in prayer to God for rain. The rain came ; and MARCUS ANTONINUS attributed the deliverance of his army to their prayers, and afterwards favoured Christianity.

VIII. MOSHEIM remarks, that about this time the ministers of the gospel, though pious, were so illiterate, that the progress of the gospel could not be attributed to *human* effort, but to divine providence.

IX. In the fourth century, CONSTANTINE THE GREAT, on beholding, as he imagined, a miraculous cross in the sky, embraced Christianity. Whether or not his conversion was real, he became instrumental in the propagation of the gospel. He abolished sacrifices, and shut heathen temples.

X. Christianity was somewhat checked by the apos-

tasy of his successor, JULIAN ; but the hand of providence was believed by the Christians to have guided the lance of a Persian soldier, which killed him before he had reigned a couple of years.

XI. Thereafter, the Emperors, who succeeded, professed and promoted Christianity ; and the gospel, like a lamp, wherever it was carried, shed a glorious light : but we cannot go into details. At length we read of monasteries and schools—priests, bishops, and patriarchs—assemblies and councils—the latter prescribing rules for faith and manners. Under designing men, the Church, no doubt, became corrupt. The Bishop of Rome first assumed the dignity of president, next reviewed the judgments of other bishops, and finally seized temporal power, and established the papacy. The Church of Rome then grew in wealth and arrogance, in superstition and vice. The Popes pardoned sins for money, and became drunk with the blood of the saints. Spiritual darkness now overspread the land, and it appeared as if God had forsaken His people. But, though sorely tried, His people were not forsaken ; and we trace His providence, overruling the conduct of wicked men, to bring about the Reformation, as will appear immediately.

XII. A priest of Rome sold openly in Germany pardons for sin, issued by POPE LEO X. LUTHER, in opposition to this, preached Christ only, and Him crucified. The sale of the pardons was thus overruled to bring Luther into the field. It was providential, also, that the Pope, in a rage, instead of taking no notice of Luther, summoned him to Rome, there to answer for his conduct.

XIII. At that time FREDERICK, the Elector of Saxony, maintained that Luther should be tried by the German tribunals. The Pope blundered in unsuccessfully trying to resist this ; and a diet at Augsburg was fixed for the

trial. Thereupon a Cardinal was appointed by the Pope to preside; but providentially the Cardinal behaved so intolerantly and imperiously, in the preliminary arrangements, as to give Luther a good apology for leaving Augsburg. The public mind was now inflamed against the Pope, who, instead of endeavouring to soothe it, issued an edict commanding all to believe in his power to forgive sin. Luther appealed to a General Council against the edict. The Pope then saw his error, and employed a man of subtilty to endeavour to effect a compromise with Luther; and this man so far succeeded as to induce Luther to write an explanatory letter to the Pope, with which, if the Pope had been satisfied, the dispute might have ended. But providentially, as we think, the Pope rejected the letter. The vital question was now raised, and a public debate ended in the amiable MELANCTHON becoming one of Luther's illustrious coadjutors. At this time the heroic and sagacious ZWINGLI was undermining the Pope's pretensions in Switzerland. The exasperated Pope then excommunicated Luther. A council at Worms was held in 1521, to which Luther said, 'If he were obliged to encounter as many devils as there were tyles upon the houses, he would go.' The Pope then died.

XIV. His successor, ADRIAN VI., at last tried what Leo should have done at first. He pretended to be willing to correct Romish errors; but it was too late. The princes of Germany were roused, and, step by step, the Reformation advanced. In 1529 the Reformers were called Protestants. Subsequent attempts at reconciliation failed. Truth cannot permanently be combined with error. A confederacy of Protestant princes invited England, France, Denmark, and Sweden, to join them. That which was at first so small as to be compared to a man's hand, now spread over Europe. A truce was effected; but a party

that can command a truce may soon proclaim a victory. The Protestant faith was established in Germany in 1555.

XV. About that time the sinister objects of HENRY VIII. of England led him to quarrel with the Pope, and to renounce his jurisdiction in England; and thus again the wrath of man was overruled for gracious purposes.

XVI. About the same time, KNOX was instrumental in bringing about the Reformation in Scotland. He was guided through a dark night as by a pillar of fire. We have neither time, nor are we qualified to describe its glorious results, by which our country is blessed to this day. May they be long preserved to us both in Church and State.

XVII. Let us now turn to the history of the TURKS. Sudden in their rise, destructive in their conquests, and grossly impure in their faith, they also were overruled by Providence to render, in the end, good service, unconsciously, to christianity. At the close of the thirteenth century they attacked all kinds of religion *except* that of Christ. They ruthlessly destroyed temples in which idols were enshrined, and left unnoticed the humble sanctuaries in which the invisible God was worshipped. The Turkish scimitar smote down the mitred priest and the shaven monk, and overlooked, perhaps despised, the man of humble rank and a pure faith. The Turks destroyed the Popish power in the East, and thus shielded Protestantism, not once and again, but repeatedly, and became a counterpoise to the Popish power in the West. Thus God rules the nations.

XVIII. In the early career of MAHOMET he fled into a cave for protection from his pursuers. As they approached the cave, they noticed a little bird sitting on a twig which overhung the cave, and, concluding that he could not have gone into it, otherwise the bird would have been dis-

turbed, they, in their hurry, passed on, and thereupon Mahomet escaped.

XIX. Mr JAMES HALDANE did much to promote the evangelisation of Scotland. But he could not have done so if he had not missed, as it seemed accidentally, the sailing of a vessel to India, where he expected a lucrative appointment. The vessel sailed without him, and was never afterwards heard of.

XX. The British and Foreign Bible Society, for some years before 1821, circulated the Bible, with the Apocrypha, in the Continent. Mr ROBERT HALDANE had occasion to call at the office of the Society, and on leaving it, forgot his umbrella. Next day he returned in quest of his umbrella, and there he met a sub-committee in conference about issuing a Toulouse Bible with the Apocrypha. A serious dispute occurred, which led to a public discussion, and ended in the Apocrypha being withdrawn. Mr Haldane used to remark, that this termination of the dispute was the result of his having forgotten his umbrella. May it not have been providential?

XXI. Mr HALDANE visited Geneva, at one time the glory of the Reformation, but then sunk in error. In the morning of the day fixed for his leaving Geneva, he strolled out, as he said, to take a last look at its beautiful scenery, with a conductor or guide, who happened to be a student, who knew much of Socrates and Plato, but nothing of Christ's atonement. Struck by Mr Haldane's conversation, the student expressed an earnest desire that Mr Haldane would unfold his religious views to him, and to some fellow-students, whose attendance he promised. Mr Haldane, for that purpose, agreed to delay his departure. Meetings with about twenty students were then held daily, and the Scriptures were read and expounded by Mr Haldane. Some Socinian and Arian pastors got alarmed, and

preached against Mr Haldane's doctrines, only thereby giving them increased notoriety, and, in the end, leading to the conversion of the young MERLE D'AUBIGNE and other remarkable men, and to what might be called a new Reformation. So much from Mr Haldane's intended last stroll.

XXII. In 1596, ANDREW MELVILLE, with a deputation, waited on JAMES VI. at Falkland. Melville was ready with a mild and carefully prepared speech, in the hope of propitiating the unfriendly king. The suddenness, however, of the king's rage, in accusing them of sedition, scattered Melville's premeditated oration, and, instead of it, he said to the king—'I must tell you that there are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland : there is King James, the head of the commonwealth, and there is Christ Jesus, the head of the Church, whose subject King James the Sixth is, and of whose kingdom he is not a king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member. You are not head of the Church. You cannot give us eternal life, and you cannot deprive us of it.' During the delivery of this bold but honest speech, the rage of King James cooled down, and he dismissed the deputation with at least fair promises. This reminds us of the verse—'When ye are taken before kings and rulers for my name's sake, it shall be given unto you what you shall say.'

XXIII. ANDREW DUNCAN, the minister of Crail, was brought before a bench of Bishops in 1619 for the crime of having preached the gospel, and he was banished to Berwick, '*there to live on his own charges.*' He had a numerous family, his means were soon exhausted, and at length he had no bread to give them. In his extremity he found first a sack of provisions, and again food, cordials, linen, and money, left at his door by *unknown* friends, and in this way he was supported till the term of his

banishment expired, as providentially as the prophet was fed by the ravens.

XXIV. At the close of a sermon, GEORGE WISHART, who suffered martyrdom, noticed a suspicious-looking man, whom he took hold of, and found a dagger concealed under his clothes. He said to him—‘My friend, what would ye do?’ The intended assassin, in his confusion, confessed that he had been bribed to stab Wishart. The bystanders would have taken summary vengeance on him, if they had not been prevented by the interposition of Wishart. ‘God’s eyes are on the righteous.’

XXV. On another occasion WISHART received a letter purporting to be from a friend who was dangerously ill, and he set off to see him. On the way he asked a person, who accompanied him, to ride forward and look about, because he had a *presentiment* that there was a plot laid against his life. The person rode forward, and discovered about sixty horsemen lying in wait, and Wishart, timeously warned, escaped. Thus, providentially, ‘the counsel of the heathen was brought to nought.’

XXVI. At length the time arrived when the purposes of God with WISHART on earth were finished, and when, perhaps, they would be better served by his death. Betrayed into the hands of Cardinal Beaton, he was, after a mock trial, condemned to the flames. The sentence was speedily executed; and the Cardinal gratified his malice by viewing the execution from the Castle of St Andrews. After the flames were kindled, Wishart, looking at the Cardinal, called out—‘He who from yonder high place beholdeth me with such pride, shall, within a few days, lye in the same as ignominiously as he is seen proudly to rest himself.’ We do not justify what followed; but so it was, that on the 29th May 1546, a small band, headed by Kirkaldy of Grange, surprised the Castle, slew the

Cardinal, and exposed his dead body on the very tower from which, a few days before, he witnessed, in savage pomp, the shameful execution. Under God's providence the Cardinal 'had judgment without mercy, who shewed no mercy.'

XXVII. PHILIP of Spain determined to extirpate the Protestant religion throughout Europe. As part of his plan, he prepared a hundred and fifty ships, all of them, except twenty, being at that time of an unusually great size, with which to invade GREAT BRITAIN. The British had only twenty-eight small ships, besides merchant vessels of trifling tonnage. But—

1. At the moment when the Armada, called by the Spaniards the Invincible, was about to sail, its famous admiral was seized with fever, and died.

2. The vice-admiral, at the same time, also died.

3. The admiral chosen in such an emergency turned out to be incompetent.

4. At length the Armada sailed, but it was instantly so much damaged by a tempest, that it was forced to return to be repaired. This occasioned a delay, which enabled the English to make some defensive preparation.

5. Again the Armada sailed; but instead of proceeding directly to the Thames, as was intended, in order to accomplish, by a single blow, the conquest of Britain, the Spanish admiral, relying on some erroneous information, altered his course, in the hope of finding the small English fleet cooped up in Plymouth harbour. As he approached the harbour, night came on; and instead of sailing so as to command the harbour, he stood off till next morning, and during the night the English fleet left the harbour, and escaped.

6. Next day the Armada formed itself like a vast

crescent of about seven miles, when one of its largest vessels took fire.

7. Another large ship sprang her mast, and became useless.

8. Alarmed at the sight of the advance of some small English ships, which it was thought, from their daring, must have been filled with combustible materials, many of the ships of the Armada cut their cables and fled !

9. The Spanish ships were built so high, that in close fight their guns fired over the English ships, while the guns of the English scarcely ever missed the Spanish ships.

10. Some of the Spanish ships then endeavoured to escape by the Orkneys, but they were overtaken by another storm, and wrecked. In the end, the Spanish disasters were complete, and the civil and religious freedom of Britain were saved.


The King of Spain imputed his disasters to the storms, and not to the overruling providence of God. On the other hand, the Queen of England rejoiced in such providence, struck a medal in commemoration of it, bearing the motto, 'God blew, and they were scattered.'

XXVIII. In the last century LORD HOWE sailed with supplies for the relief of Gibraltar. As he approached the rock, he learned that a combined Spanish and French fleet, superior to his own, and with a favourable wind, were approaching, and would, in all likelihood, intercept him. Suddenly both fleets were becalmed. During the calm Howe could not reach Gibraltar, but neither could the combined fleet get between it and him. In a little while the wind changed, and a violent gale sprang up, which blew the combined fleets backward *from* Gibraltar, and hurried Lord Howe's fleet forward, *into* Gibraltar. God, who 'holds the wind in His fist,' can employ it as His ministering servant. The winds and the waves obey Him.

XXIX. A few days before the battle of Waterloo, BLUCHER, who commanded the Prussians, was unhorsed at Ligny, and lost his hat and plume. A private soldier had scarcely time to put his own common hat on Blucher's head, before a charge of French cavalry passed without recognising him in his improvised disguise, and thus this distinguished officer was saved in time to reach Waterloo, and secure the full fruits of Wellington's great victory, which, from the exhaustion of the British, might not otherwise have been reaped. Perhaps it was well for Europe and for himself that Blucher lost his hat and plume.

XXX. We give the following from vol. ii. p. 141, of the Lectures of Sir James Stephens, regarding the House of Valois, in France, which was a bloody and deceitful House:—HENRY II. perished in the prime of life by the lance of Montgomery. His eldest son, Francis II., did not complete his nineteenth year. The unhappy Charles IX., his second son, had not reached the age of twenty-four, when he died in fearful torments. At the same period, the Duke d'Alençon, the fourth son, fell a victim to intemperance. Henry III., his only remaining son, was assassinated in his thirty-eighth year. Francis of Guise met the same fate while in the full vigour of his manhood; and Henry of Guise did not complete his thirty-seventh year, when he was struck down by the daggers of hired assassins, and the House of Valois then became extinct. 'The bloody and deceitful men' do not live half their days.

XXXI. Again, Sir James Stephens informs us, that Henry IV., who apostatised from the Reformation, which he had sworn to defend, left his crown to seven heirs in succession; but of these one died on the scaffold, three were disposed of by insurrection, one left a name of unmiti-



gated infamy, another died in a state of melancholy, and his grandson, Louis XIV., the apparently splendid exception, paved the downward path to the ruin of his dynasty. Thus, though hand join in hand, the wicked do not always go unpunished.

XXXII. A pious missionary of the name of ZINZENDORF, labouring near the Susquehanna, where it was said,

‘ Nothing dwell but beasts of prey,
And men as fierce and wild as they,’

was sleeping in his tent, when some Indians came for the express purpose of killing him. They saw a large serpent crawling over him without hurting him. They were much surprised at the sight, and whispered to each other, ‘ He is protected by the Great Spirit, who will punish us if we hurt him ;’ and they left him. PAUL had a similar escape from barbarians, when they saw him, unhurt, shake off the viper.

XXXIII. Many years ago, the sovereign signed a respite to a man under sentence of death, and it was entrusted to the usual official to be forwarded. Most reprehensibly the official forgot to do so. During the following night, a superior officer could not sleep, and in a fit of restlessness he went into the official’s office, which he had *never* once done under night before. To his horror he noticed the respite, and the last post was gone. Hastily calling for a post-chaise, he arrived just in time to prevent the execution. This reminds us of AHASUERUS, who, as given in the Book of Esther, ‘ on that night could not sleep,’ and, in consequence, the slaughter of the Jews was stopped.

XXXIV. Two miners, the one a Christian and the other an infidel, fired a train in a mine, expecting that they would be drawn up before the explosion. They

then leapt into the basket, but, from some cause, the people at the surface found it too heavy. *Instantly* the Christian leapt out, exclaiming to the other, 'Sit still, or you are lost for eternity.' Scarcely had the basket begun to ascend when the explosion echoed through the mine, scattering rended rocks in all directions. The heroic man of God, however, was found unhurt, two large pieces of rock having formed a sort of arch over him. With David, he may have prayed in the time of trouble, 'Thou shalt hide me in Thy pavilion,' *Psa. xxvii. 5.*

XXXV. An African left a gun inside his house at an open window, loaded. He had *never before* left a loaded gun *inside* his house. Suddenly, when standing with his wife and children at the door, he saw a lion crouching, and about to spring at them. He had just time to snatch his gun through the window and shoot the lion. It was surely providential that he left his gun loaded inside the house on *that* occasion.

XXXVI. A clergyman had too long preached sermons merely on morals. One Sabbath morning a person contrived to slip into his pulpit a piece of paper containing the words, 'Sir, we would see Jesus.' Struck as by this solemn warning, the minister became a converted man, and took for his text next Sabbath, 'Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.'

XXXVII. Soon after a gentleman had seated himself under a tree, the sky became clouded, and a person passing by remarked to him, that a storm was coming on, and that he had better seek shelter somewhere. He took the advice, and within five minutes a flash of lightning struck down the tree. He would have been killed but for the providential warning.

XXXVIII. We read a narrative in the 'Christian Treasury,' that some years ago an infidel miller used to

beguile the nights with some idle book, when he remained watching his mill. One night he forgot his book, but he noticed a New Testament which some one had left there by mistake. It was a strange book to him. He read it, and his heart was opened. We need not pursue the narrative. His conversion led to that of his family and some of his neighbours. Thus it is that God in mercy is sometimes found of them who seek Him not.

XXXIX. A young man, who was passionately fond of the theatre, resolved to become an actor. One night, on his way to the theatre, he accidentally met a friend whom he had not seen for many years, who persuaded him to go to a Bible meeting. The young man went, his attention was aroused, and he became a converted man. A few years after that accidental meeting, he was a faithful and laborious minister of the gospel. All of us, like his friend, should do the little that we can for the good of others. 'Withhold not thine hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that,' Eccles. xi. 6.

XL. Some years ago a public meeting was held at Liverpool for supplying Bibles to sailors. The gentleman who made the motion, said he hoped it would be seconded by some one of the sailors whom he observed present. After a short silence, an old *blind* sailor rose and said, that when he was twenty years of age, and very wicked, he had lost his eyesight by lightning when his ship was in a storm off the coast of Guinea, and that afterwards a friend, pitying his helpless condition, read something to him. After his friend had read to him on several occasions, he added, 'I exclaimed, Oh, sir, what book is that? I was told it was the Bible. From that moment, though blind, I saw. I second the motion.'

XLI. A person was found killed under circumstances which at first left it doubtful whether or not he had com-

mitted suicide ; but the bloody mark of the thumb of a right hand was observed on the back of *his* right hand, which could not possibly have been a mark from his own. This led to the conviction of the guilty person. 'If I say surely the darkness shall cover me ; even the night shall be light about me. The darkness hideth not from THEE. The darkness and the light are both alike to THEE,' Psa. cxxxix. 11, 12.

XLII. Some years ago a pious widow, now dead, had a son, whose bad conduct, in spite of her affectionate and Christian instructions, almost broke her heart. He went to sea. She implored him to keep, for her sake, a New Testament which she gave him. She afterwards heard that he was wrecked. After this another sailor called on her to inform her that her son had not been drowned, but had died after a severe illness, during which he had repented and wept over his sins, and, with almost his expiring breath, said, 'Jack, take this Testament and read it, and may God bless you. It is all I have. If you ever meet my mother, give it to her.' Jack afterwards delivered a well worn Testament to the widowed mother, who eagerly seized it, and wept, in her turn, as she saw her son's well known handwriting on its flyleaf. Overpowered by her emotions, she exclaimed, 'My son is not dead, but liveth !'

XLIII. The Rev. HECTOR M'PHAIL of Resolis, in the north country, Presbytery of Chanonry, on one occasion when travelling, put up at an inn, and proposed in the evening to have family worship. This was agreed to, and all assembled except a servant girl, who, as the landlord explained, was too ignorant and dirty to be present. She has a soul to be saved, said Mr M'Phail,—bring her—and she was brought. At the conclusion he found that she was indeed grossly ignorant. He advised her to

learn to read her Bible, and to offer up two prayers daily—very short prayers—consisting of only four words each; the one—‘Lord shew me *myself*,’ the other—‘Lord shew me *Thyself*.’ Many years afterwards he met a respectable woman whom he could not recognise, who said to him—‘I am the person whom, when a little girl, you taught to offer up to God two very short prayers; by the first I was brought to the feet of my Saviour, and by the second I was brought to behold God in Christ as a reconciled Father.’ How providential it was that Mr M’Phail declined to proceed with family worship without the ignorant dirty girl.

XLIV. The Rev. JOHN WELSH, one of our Scots worthies, who was banished from Scotland in 1605, went to France. He was able to preach in the French language, and was chosen to be the minister of a Protestant congregation. Louis the XIII. of France caused him to be apprehended, and asked him how he dared to preach the Reformed doctrines? ‘Sire (replied Welsh), if your Majesty knew what I preached, you would both come yourself and advise others to come and hear me, for I preach not as your priests do:—*First*, I preach that we cannot be saved by our own merits; and *Second*, I preach that, as you are king of France, there is no man in this kingdom above you; but your priests subject you to the Pope of Rome, which I will never do.’ The king replied—‘Very good; be assured of my protection.’ Welsh realised the fulfilment of Christ’s promise—‘When ye are taken before magistrates and powers, the Holy Ghost will teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.’

These illustrations could be multiplied indefinitely. God in His providence overrules all human actions for the accomplishment of His own purposes. Man ‘who

soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption,' Gal. v. 7, 8. When God's providence confers blessings, withhold not your gratitude to Him, though they may seem to have been brought about by natural causes. A sailor who escapes from a wreck, in consequence of a wave dashing to him a piece of the wreck, should thank God for it. Let us all do our best, both for ourselves and others, and leave results to God. If we become what the world calls unfortunate, it may be to wean us from it, and to make us happier in the end. If health fail, or friends forsake us, it may be to teach us to cling to one who sticketh closer than any brother. Thank God in prosperity—trust Him at all times, even in adversity. Disappointments may avert calamities—just as a bird expelled from its nest may have escaped destruction from the falling wall, in which it fondly nestled. Be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Pray without ceasing. Rejoice evermore. Difficulties apparently inextricable, and dangers seemingly insurmountable, may vanish at the touch of an unseen hand. We shall be tried at last, not by results. Leave results with God. Till then, He who gave His Son to save us, will with Him freely, if we do our duty, give us all things which we really need.

And now, with pleasant memories of many Sabbath evenings, FAREWELL !

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